

Russian Revolution Anniversary Issue
Articles by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky

The New _____ **INTERNATIONAL**

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MARX, TROTSKY, LENIN ON RUSSIA

25 Years of the Russian Revolution

By Max Shachtman

Stalinist Diplomacy and the War

By Albert Gates

Notes, Archives and Book Reviews

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Editor: ALBERT GATES

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Editor's Note

Because the current issue has been devoted entirely to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, the discussion on the national question will be carried in the December number.

The December issue will also contain a report on the trade union situation in the country by David Coolidge, who attended the UMWA and CIO conventions. The final installment, "China in the War," by Max Shachtman, will also appear, as well as special articles, archives and book reviews.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOLUME VIII

NOVEMBER, 1942

NUMBER 10

25 Years of the Russian Revolution

A Critical Appraisal

It is hard to believe that twenty-five years have passed since the Bolshevik Revolution. A quarter of a century, measured in terms of world history, is only a moment, to be sure. But people do not live in terms of world history. They live and struggle for existence in terms of their own time; at most, of yesterday, today and tomorrow. And measured in these terms—above all when it is remembered that in our time events crowd each other with a speed utterly unknown in earlier epochs—a quarter of a century is a long time.

So much has happened in these twenty-five years that seems to refute the claims and predictions of the men who led the revolution and the régime created by it. We will create an entirely new type of state, a state which, properly speaking, is no longer a state because from the day of its establishment it is already in the process of dying out, said Lenin on the eve of the Bolshevik seizure of power. Yet the state in Russia today is the most despotic and oppressive the country ever knew, one might almost say the world ever knew.

Now we proceed to lay the foundations of socialism, were the simple words with which Lenin concluded his first public appearance after the revolution freed him from Kerensky's illegality. But if someone had set out deliberately to elaborate a wickedly malicious caricature of socialism, a social monstrosity in which labor enjoys neither the fruits of its toil nor the invigorating air of liberty, he could hardly have improved upon present Russian society.

We count firmly on the world revolution, on the state aid of the workers of the advanced countries of the West, for we tell you openly that without it we shall surely perish. We are nothing but a beleaguered fortress, which we can hold for any length of time only if the revolution is victorious in the other countries. Between our revolution and the capitalist world, there is no possibility of reconciliation, no possibility of peaceful coexistence.—Thus spake Lenin and Trotsky and all the other leaders of the revolution, not once but time and again. Yet, although the world revolution which did break out in Europe turned out to be a failure, the rule of the bourgeoisie was not restored in Russia.

We may have socialism in Russia in the days of our grandchildren, said Lenin. A real rise in socialist economy can be expected only after the revolution in other countries, wrote Trotsky. Yet, the revolution in other countries failed to triumph and Russia nevertheless experienced a tremendous and unforeseen development of its economy. As for the socialist

society that Lenin postponed for at least two generations, it has long ago been achieved, according to Stalin.

The predictions seem to have been refuted. But only "seem." The reality is different, fundamentally different, from the appearance. With hardly an exception the forecasts of the most authentic leaders of the revolution, Lenin and Trotsky, proved to be clairvoyant, and the elapsed quarter of a century has confirmed them, some of them tragically, some of them in a unique and unexpected way.

What has happened since 1917? Why did it happen? What does it signify?

The first question is sooner answered than the second; the second sooner than the third.

The régime established by the Bolshevik revolution no longer exists. The mastery of the workers in the factories has been abolished. The factory councils are a half-forgotten memory. The trade unions, the school of communism under Lenin, and the protector of the workers' interests even from the state itself, have become police institutions in the factories, organizing and carrying through an exploitation of labor whose intensity would not be tolerated by a half-decent union under capitalism. The worker is now chained to his job and may not leave it without police permission, and the system is even more universally and rigidly enforced than in Germany. One critical word from the worker, and he finds himself on the street, with an even worse fate possible.

The peasant is in little better position, if at all. His master is no longer the feudal landlord or the fiscal agent of the Czar. In their place is an arrogant, all-powerful, all-devouring bureaucrat, imposed from above, unconcerned with the welfare of the peasantry, fraternizing with the well-to-do farmers (the "millionaire *kolkhozniki*") if with anyone, but interested above all in seeing to it that the agricultural population meets or exceeds the productive demands made upon it by the new rulers of society. There is no resemblance here with that *smychka*, that alliance between worker and peasant, which Lenin considered indispensable for the maintenance of the Soviet state.

For that matter, the Soviet state no longer exists either. The omnipresent bureaucratic machine exists, but not the Soviets. There is more significance in Hitler's occasional convocations of what he continues to call the Reichstag than in Stalin's less occasional convocations of what is constitutionally the supreme legislative and executive body of the country, the two upper Soviet houses. For that matter, it would not make a particle of difference if they met twelve hours of

every day. They are nothing but a megaphone of Stalin's Political Bureau. The way in which they were elected became an international joke for the simple reason that they were not really elected by their constituents, they were appointed by the machine. Elections to the Soviet, once tangible evidence of the people's control of their political representatives, once tangible evidence that with all its shortcomings the Soviet system was a thousand times more democratic than the most democratic of capitalist parliamentary systems, now have less significance than a senatorial election in Mississippi—much, much less.

The Bolshevik Party, indispensable element, principal element of workers' rule in Soviet Russia, has been destroyed root and branch. Hitler has not yet succeeded in crushing the revolutionary Marxist movement with the same thoroughness displayed by Stalin. As for the Czarist Okhrana, it was like a town constable compared with the OGPU. Under Lenin, the prison cells, at least 95 per cent of them, were filled with Czarist noblemen, bureaucrats, policemen and spies, with landlords and bankers and monopolists, with priests and generals of the old régime, and with Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists who had turned from the weapon of criticism of the Bolshevik régime to the criticism of weapons. Under Stalin, the prison cells, the concentration camps (the largest and most numerous in the world), the forced-labor camps, and the cemeteries are filled with literally millions of innocent workers and peasants, and with tens of thousands of revolutionary Marxists. For nowhere are the Marxists hounded with such venomous persistency and mercilessness as in modern Russia. This contrast tells everything.

All trace of democratic rights—and the attainment of socialism is absolutely inconceivable without them—has been relentlessly extirpated. Workers and peasants have no right to meet together freely, no right to freedom of speech, no right to freedom of the press, no right to organize, no right to strike, no right to change jobs freely, no right to change residence freely. The right to emigrate is as fiercely prohibited as the right to immigrate. The system of family hostages for an offender is incorporated into the country's statutes. Foreign passports are not available; the internal passport is the universal obligation. The Russian serfs before Alexander "freed" them in 1861 had more liberty than the worker or peasant of Russia today.

Early Achievements

The advanced social legislation inaugurated in Lenin's time, which evoked the glistening admiration of enlightened people—even bourgeois—through the world, has been wiped out, some in statute, some in practice, some in both. Free education is now limited; the worker's child is taught to keep his place in the lower scholastic ranks, for the higher schools are reserved to the offspring of the well-to-do and the influential. As for the curriculum, it is not even a mockery of the Leninist period because it bears no resemblance to it whatsoever. The proletarian and peasant woman is no longer the sex liberated by October; she is commanded by the state to breed and breed and breed, and keep her mouth shut like everyone else. As for the new ruling "Soviet woman," she is well exemplified by the recent visitor to America, Lyudmilla Pavlichenko, and her chauvinistic rantings.

Everything else has changed. The foreign policy of the régime has nothing in common with Lenin's revolutionary proletarian internationalism. It fears the socialist revolution not one whit less than does Churchill or Hitler, and has more

than once sent its forces abroad to suppress it. In deceit, not toward its diplomatic counterparts but toward the people of its own and other countries, in behind-the-scenes trickery and secrecy, in cold-blooded pacts with capitalist imperialism for the division of loot, it yields to few, if any, predecessors or contemporaries.

All that was done by Lenin and Trotsky in the decisive field of nationalities—decisive especially for Russia, which under Czarism was a great prison of national minorities—has been undone by the new régime. The peripheral republics of the Union, the non-Russian peoples, are treated with that truly Great-Russian chauvinism, that imperial Muscovite contempt, which Lenin observed in Stalin more than twenty years ago. That apparently personal trait of the one bureaucrat is now an essential characteristic of the whole ruling bureaucracy. The latter, from its *Vozhd* on down, has not even hesitated to yield the dirty weapon of anti-Semitism. In the Soviet Union the national question has been solved—we read only the other day in a periodical that calls itself, of all things, Trotskyist. So little has it been solved that the Fourth International has warned more than once about the anti-Semitism of the régime, and has found it necessary to demand the right of self-determination for the Ukraine, for White Russia, etc., to the point of separation from the Moscow régime.

Where the Revolution, and the Communist International it created, was an inspiration, a beacon light, a rallying center for the oppressed all over the world, it has now become the great disorganizer and demoralizer and destroyer of the labor and revolutionary movements everywhere. The so-called Communist Parties are concerned with anything you wish, but not with the socialist revolution. Their function is the protection of the interests of the Stalinist autocracy. If the fulfillment of this function requires calling strikes, they call them; breaking strikes, they break them; organizing unions, they organize them; destroying unions, they destroy them; supporting the capitalist régime, they support it; opposing the régime, they oppose it; opposing entry into the war, they oppose it; supporting entry into the war, they clamor fiercely for it. With the genuine interests of the working class or the labor movement, they have nothing in common, any more than their paymasters in the Kremlin have.

Everything seems to have been thrown back to where we were in 1914, and in some respects, still further back.

Why did it happen?

We shall surely go under if the world revolution does not come to our aid. Our own efforts were sufficient for the establishment of a workers' state, but to establish socialism the efforts of more advanced countries are required. That, as previously noted, is what the Bolsheviks said to the Russian masses, and they proved to be right.

The revolution came in the West, and even in those countries where the struggle did not reach the point of uprisings there was one revolutionary situation after another. But everywhere the tidal wave broke against a capitalist bulwark whose strength was badly estimated—the social democracy. More accurately, the strength of the conscious revolutionary leadership or the speed with which it would separate itself from the apron strings of social democracy and constitute itself independently—these were overestimated by the Bolsheviks. No country produced in time a party quite like the Bolsheviks, quite like the Bolshevik leadership. The tidal wave was just about strong enough to overthrow the more reactionary of the European régimes, but not strong enough

to overthrow capitalism. But the Bolsheviks in Russia obtained a short breathing spell.

They needed it badly. The country was war-torn and war-weary. Three years of blood-letting in the World War; then the February revolution; then the October Revolution; then the terrible civil war and the exhausting struggle against the armies of imperialist intervention; then, as if that were not enough, the famine. All this while, the hopes for world revolution went crashing to the ground, one after another: Germany, Hungary, Austria, Italy, England. Also, all this while the elite of Bolshevism—the best of the old and the best of the young, the most devoted, the most reliable, the most intransigent—had sacrificed itself in the fight to keep the Soviet régime alive, in every field, on every front.

What remained was not what the Bolsheviks had to begin with, above all from the standpoint of revolutionary resistibility. This quality was further diluted by the influx of new and untrained elements on the one side, and of any number of old wheelhorses from the Menshevik and the SR's, to say nothing of turncoats from the bourgeois parties. This combination was not ideally suited to stem the rise of a conservative reaction in the country.

The peasant wanted no more disturbances, at home or abroad. He had his piece of land, and with the moderate concessions to free trading provided for under the New Economic Policy, he was more or less content, particularly with the hope that Soviet Russia might evolve gradually and peacefully to "NEP Russia." If this was true of the peasants in general, it was especially true of the better-off peasant, the kulak, who was beginning to raise his head again.

The bulk of the workers were getting tired, too. The first slight economic boom was in striking contrast to the gray days of war communism. The conditions were favorable for a "status quo mood" and not favorable to the idea of continuing to put the accent on world revolution.

Most serious of all, the party and Soviet officialdom, the bureaucracy, the real repository of power, gave way to the pessimistic moods ("the world revolution will come, of course, but God alone knows when"), then began to rationalize them, and ended by fostering them.

Origin of Conservative Developments

The remaining Bolshevik bureaucracy, especially as supplemented and permeated by bandwagon-jumping Menshevik and bourgeois elements, had special characteristics.

In the first place, these outcasts of Czarist society had become unchallenged masters of one-sixth of the earth, in a matter of months, so to speak. They headed a régime which had triumphantly dealt with all the counter-revolutionary armies and all the interventionist armies. Such sensational successes were not calculated to promote plebian modesty or humility. In the second place, any corrective criticism which the existence even of conservative workers' parties might have made possible, was virtually destroyed when the Mensheviks and SR's invited outlawry by their reckless and fatal policy of taking up arms against the Soviet power in collaboration with the bourgeois counter-revolution and under the banner of the pitiable Constituent Assembly. Together with the temporary prohibition of active factions in the Bolshevik Party during the Kronstadt uprising scare, this provided a broader base for the rise of an absolutist bureaucracy in the ruling party and then in the country at large.

In the third place, the party officialdom generally lacked what might be called Lenin's or Trotsky's internationalist socialist culture, and was not imbued with Lenin's socialist and internationalist conception of the old and, after 1917, officially discarded slogan of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry." It is significant that this slogan was revived by the bureaucracy after Lenin's death, and has been officially upheld by it for most of the world to the present day. It interpreted the slogan, in Russia in 1917, in China in 1925-27, and afterward, as providing for some sort of non-proletarian and yet non-bourgeois régime. This interpretation was not inaccurate at least so far as it related to the inner political ambitions of the bureaucracy, striving for freedom from the existing classes, and to the path of development it was to tread years later. It is not hard to find, in the polemics of some fifteen years ago, significant hints from the Stalinists that if the "workers' power" had to be abandoned, the restoration of the bourgeoisie would not necessarily follow, because "we can retreat" to the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," that is, to their own unalloyed dictatorship.

To rationalize, and then to nurture the conservative moods in the country, the bureaucracy adopted without hesitation the Stalinist theory of "socialism in a single country." It would be hard to think up an apter theoretical and ideological formulation of the bureaucracy's aspirations. It corresponded to its provincial nationalism that was to become nationalist chauvinism, as well as to the nationalist reaction among the backward elements of the land; to its desire to appease the world bourgeoisie by assurances of non-revolutionary intentions; to its need of appeasing the socialist aspirations and traditions of the masses while it developed a "socialist" paradise for itself, for the bureaucracy, in one country.

The epic struggle of Trotsky and his comrades of the Opposition for workers' democracy—that is, for a genuine workers' state—and for socialist internationalism as the only means of preserving and fructifying that state, will always remain richly instructive as well as inspiring. What was decisive in that struggle was not the tactical errors in fighting that may have been made, or the inadequacy or error that may be found in the political appraisal of the Stalin faction, or even in the persistency shown to the end in designating modern Russia as a workers' state. Towering high above all this is the fact that the Trotskyist Opposition continued without a break the struggle for the proletarian revolution, for the principles of October, and for world socialism. However that may be, the fact is that the efforts of the Opposition did not suffice to prevent the consolidation of the Stalinist reaction.

The world revolution did not come in time to save the Russian Revolution. The Stalinist counter-revolution came to suppress the world revolution, and thereby it strengthened its own stranglehold on the Russian state.

What does it signify, this Stalinist counter-revolution?

In facing honestly and courageously the prospect of defeat of the revolution, Lenin of course had in mind the restoration of capitalism. That is entirely understandable. Equally understandable is the fact that in launching the struggle against the growing reaction in the party, Trotsky saw in the bureaucracy the carrier of the germ of capitalist restoration. But there are no compelling reasons to repeat these formulæ today, twenty or more years later, and in the light of all that has happened.

Before his expulsion from the Bolshevik Party, and for a long time after, Trotsky characterized the ruling régime as a Right-Center bloc, the former element represented by Rykov,

Tomsky and Bukharin, the latter by Stalin and his immediate entourage. The Right wing, he said, is the principal channel through which the bourgeois restoration is infiltrating the party and the country as a whole. Without deliberation, to be sure, it is nevertheless the representative of the social aspirations of the bourgeois counter-revolution. The Opposition represents the aspirations of the proletariat and bases itself upon it. The Center, Stalin? It is not a serious force. It has not firm class bases. It represents essentially the bureaucracy, which appears powerful but is actually of little social significance. In the approaching showdown, only the Right wing and the Left wing will be serious political factors. Stalinist Centrism, which oscillates between the two, will capitulate to the Right wing, a small section of it perhaps fighting on the side of the Left. As a distinctive current, it will dissolve in the heat of the class struggle between bourgeois restoration and the proletariat.

Trotsky proceeded from the doctrine that in Russia, as elsewhere, the proletariat can rule or the bourgeoisie—no one else. The result was the systematic underestimation of the significance of the Stalinist bureaucracy, of its social and political course, of its durability. It is only necessary to scan the main writings of the Opposition, particularly of Trotsky, to arrive firmly at that conclusion. A favorite phrase of the Opposition was, "The Right wing tail will hit the Center over the head and crush it." A repeated prediction of the Opposition was that Stalin is preparing to restore private property, is undermining nationalized property, is weakening the monopoly of foreign trade—is facilitating the restoration of capitalism. The Right wing is marching that way steadily, and Stalin, although he may make a brief zig-zag to the Left, makes the moves that count to the Right. Stalin is capitulating to the kulak, to the Nepman.

But that is not what happened. To keep on saying that it did happen is sheer stupidity, at best blindness. To acknowledge that it did not happen without a critical reexamination of the old analysis is, again at best, theoretical slothfulness.

The Stalinist bureaucracy did of course march hand in hand with the Right wing throughout the fight against the proletarian Left Opposition. Against the latter, it showed not the slightest hesitation in mobilizing and even encouraging the bourgeois and semi-bourgeois elements in the country. This was, from the very beginning of the struggle in Soviet Russia, one of the indications that the Stalinist bureaucracy is closer, politically and socially, to the bourgeoisie and its class position, than it is to the proletariat. Time and again it united with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat and its most consistent spokesman, the Trotskyists. At no time, however, even during its fiercest battles with the bourgeoisie at home or abroad, did the bourgeoisie find it possible to unite with the Trotskyists. The social significance of these facts should escape no thinking person.

But once it had completed the crushing of the Left Opposition, which meant the crushing of the last traces of workers' democracy and workers' rule, it turned savagely not only upon the Right wing, which it annihilated just as thoroughly as it did the Left wing. Above all it proceeded ruthlessly and systematically to crush every bourgeois element in the country. The Five Year Plans did not prove to be a brief zigzag to the Left, to be followed by a movement to the Right, that is, to favoring the bourgeois elements in economy and politics. Contrary to expectations, the campaign continued until the kulak elements were decisively decimated (at least in their old form and on their old basis), the NEP and the Nepmen

completely wiped out, and the sector of state economy expanded beyond *anybody's* original calculations. A new bureaucracy took shape in the country—the managers and directors of the state factories, of the state and collective farms—and ended by fusing integrally with the party and state bureaucracy into a *new ruling class*.

The new ruling class had crushed the Left or proletarian party in the country. But not to the benefit of the Right wing! That section of the old Bolshevik Party it crushed with no less violence and thoroughness. It removed the workers from all control or influence over the productive forces of the country. But virtually at the same time it chopped off the grasping hands of the incipient bourgeoisie that were reaching for that control, then chopped off its head, and then chopped away the ground from under its feet. In a word, it did anything but capitulate to the bourgeois and incipient bourgeois elements in the country. It followed this by smashing the possibility, at least for a long period of time, of its rule being replaced by the rule of an outright military-Bonapartist dictatorship, represented by reactionary Prætorians like Tukhachevsky, and as usual it was not particularly scrupulous about the way it framed up and disposed of this threat to its power. Simultaneously it legalized its monopolistic power-position in the new constitution.

This was the road along which this new class took shape, and its own social order, which may be called *bureaucratic collectivism*, a reactionary, exploitive, slave state, was established.

Trotsky could not reconcile himself to such a conception, and even attacked it sharply, although in his study on *USSR in War* he left sort of theoretical door open to it. Yet there is nothing in the Marxian conception of history, of the evolution of society, of the nature of the state, and above all, there is nothing in the reality of Russian developments, which rules out the coming into existence of the bureaucratic collectivist state and its eventual disappearance from the scene. Trotsky himself once derided as "pseudo-Marxism" the point of view "which confines itself to historical mechanisms, formal analogies, converting historic epochs into a logical succession of inflexible social categories (feudalism, capitalism, socialism, autocracy, bourgeois republic, dictatorship of the proletariat...)" (*History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. I, p. 464.) Marxists, especially those educated by Lenin and Trotsky, will readily admit that classes and nations can leap forward in history, can leap over stages, can be hurled backward along the main line of historical development. But in speaking of Stalinist Russia they will obdurately refuse to acknowledge that history "permits" side-leaps, mongrel social formations, unique combinations. Leap forward? Yes! Thrust backward? Yes! Leap sideways? No!—that is strictly prohibited by the party statutes!

What is the social or historical basis of this new class? The answer is to be found in the peculiar position of the Russian revolution, and the class relations prevailing in it.

A country so inseparably connected with the stormy world of imperialism must develop its productive forces or perish as a country, that is, as an independent nation. That is true, even "separated from" the question of what class rules. In Trotsky's brilliant analysis of Russia's evolution under Czarism, he brings out this fact with incisive clarity. To defend its position, its power, its privilege, ultra-reactionary Czarism found itself driven to develop the productive forces of the country on a vast scale. For historical reasons, the miserable Russian bourgeoisie could not perform this task. Czarism, to

save itself from the assaults of more powerful and technologically more advanced outlanders, and in addition to acquire some loot for itself, built up industry, developed transportation, a communications system, a merchant marine, central banking, etc. In the course of this work, it did not allow the young bourgeoisie to get much closer to the political power of the state which the Czarist bureaucracy mobilized. But the building of capitalist economy nevertheless strengthened the *social power and position of the bourgeoisie*—that is what must be borne in mind.

The coming to power of the workers in 1917 did not diminish but rather enhanced the need of developing the productive forces of still backward Russia. First, and obviously, the war-ruined country demanded reconstruction if any kind of economic or social life was to be possible. Secondly, the economic ambitions of European capitalism to control Russia were now multiplied by a class antagonism to the new régime which, if merely translated into a military threat to the country, urgently demanded the development of the productive forces. This demand was only emphasized by the fact that in the intense crisis of post-war world imperialism, Russia offered one of the few remaining fields for capitalist relief.

But it is precisely here that the dilemma arose.

The demand for the expansion of the productive forces could not be solved by the Russian bourgeoisie. Were it strong enough to establish a new and independent bourgeois-democratic Russia, it might have been possible. But due to its peculiar historical development—that is, its historical impotence—the Russian bourgeoisie was capable of overthrowing the workers' power only as a servant of world imperialism. All it could hope to enact was the rôle of a compradore bourgeoisie, not essentially different from the Chinese national bourgeoisie. But in that capacity, neither it nor its foreign imperialist masters would expand Russia's productive forces. Under those conditions, Russia would be depressed to the level of an exploited colonial, more or less agricultural, hinterland of imperialism, pretty much like China or India. Under the best circumstances conceivable, it would not get beyond the low and fairly stagnant position of Poland, which under the Czar was the most advanced industrial section of the Empire, and under the Polish bourgeoisie experienced no development—certainly no sensational development—of its productive forces.

If the bourgeoisie of Russia was ruled out as organizer and developer of the productive forces, why then was not the proletariat able to fill that rôle? Is it not true, after all, that capitalism has reached the point where only the proletariat can end society's stagnation and release the last fetters on the development of production? Yes, entirely true, but only on an all-European scale or, more accurately, *on a world scale!* But in Russia two reservations had to be kept in mind:

1. The proletariat develops the productive forces in a *fundamentally* different sense than does the bourgeoisie, namely, socialistically, and that is the only way it can develop them; but, 2. "The authentic rise of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe," as Trotsky wrote in 1922, and "The work of construction depends entirely upon how soon the revolution is victorious in the most important countries of Europe. Only after this victory can we seriously undertake the business of construction," as Lenin said three years earlier.

These two "reservations" put the whole problem, the whole dilemma, the whole secret of what has happened in

Russia, in a nutshell. A real rise of a *socialist* economy in Russia is not possible if the proletariat is in power in Russia alone.

Yet Russian society's urgent demand for development now brooked even less delay than in the early days of Czarism. To be more concrete, the bureaucracy's elemental urge to protect and expand its power and privilege necessitated the development of the productive forces. The bourgeoisie could not accomplish this task by developing them along capitalist lines. The proletariat could not accomplish this task by developing them along socialist lines. In the course of the struggle—"Classes are the product of struggle," said Lenin—a new class took shape which could and did develop the productive forces on a tremendous scale! The new class, the collectivist bureaucracy, did not stop to inquire if the party program or statutes, or predictions, gave it permission to develop into a class and to establish its class rule. Truly a pity!

The new class did not develop the productive forces *capitalistically*, unless one wants to redefine capitalism the way it never was and the way it nowhere is, just to make it possible to put Stalinist Russia into that category, as a sort of literary punishment visited upon it for its crimes. Under its aegis, with its planning, with its directing and organizing, with its absolute control of the state that owns the means of production, Russian economy experienced an "authentic rise," even though the revolution did not come in the West. Doesn't this refute Trotsky of 1922 and Lenin of 1919? Not at all. If anything, they are confirmed, even if in a unique way. Trotsky spoke of an "authentic rise of a *socialist* economy." And of that there is no sign in Russia!

There, by the way, you have sufficient indication of the difference between the Stalinist bureaucracy and, let us say, the old Czarist bureaucracy. In developing the productive forces, the latter developed them capitalistically and—political power aside—strengthened enormously the social position and power of the bourgeoisie. The Stalinist bureaucracy, however, though developing the productive forces collectivistically, reduced the social position of the proletariat to the level of imprisoned slaves and wiped out its social power altogether. To speak of Russia now as a workers' state is anachronistic at best and an apology for Stalinism at worst. Russia is a workers' prison-for-lifers, not a workers' state. To prove that it is a workers' state it must first be disproved that it is a workers' prison. And that, alas, is precisely what nobody can do.

If our analysis of the specific origins of this new ruling class and this new, mongrel exploitive state is essentially tenable—and since abuse is not an argument, we cannot allow that it has been refuted—the conclusion as to the future of this historical incubus follows pretty clearly. It came into being and performed its reactionary function on the basis of the peculiar national position of the Russian revolution. There is no serious ground for believing that the same tragedy will be enacted following the socialist revolution in other, more advanced countries, for it is precisely the spread of the socialist revolution that spells death-a-borning to bureaucratic collectivism. It is not for nothing that Stalinist fears and detests the proletarian revolution like the devil does holy water.

The Russian proletariat faces its second great working class revolution. To overthrow the new ruling class in Russia is a task just as closely linked with the international revolution as was the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in 1917. They and their leaders, the Bolsheviks, will never be moved from the top of the list of honor: Pioneers of World Socialism and Freedom.

MAX SHACHTMAN.

Marx, Trotsky and Lenin on Russia

Introduction and Explanatory Notes

It is worth giving more than casual attention to the studies of Russia by Marx, Trotsky and Lenin which appear elsewhere in this issue. Except for Lenin's, which appeared obscurely twenty years ago in the English edition of *International Press Correspondence*, these documents are published for the first time in the English-speaking world.

The Marx-Zasulich material was rescued from oblivion by the tireless efforts of the great Marxian scholar, D. Riazanov, recently dead in Stalinist exile. As early as 1911, in going through the papers of Marx's son-in-law, Paul Lafargue, Riazanov discovered several pages covered with the tiny handwriting of Marx, and criss-crossed almost to the point of illegibility with deletions, insertions and corrections of all sorts. He soon found that he had discovered a number of drafts of a reply to a letter to Marx from Vera Zasulich, dated February 16, 1881. Zasulich was the famous former terrorist who had turned Marxist; was one of the closest comrades of George Plekhanov, father of Russian Marxism, and for that matter of Lenin; and in the early years of this century shared a place with these two on the editorial board of the famous party organ-in-exile in Switzerland, *Iskra*.

Oddly enough, inquiries from both Zasulich and Plekhanov failed to stir their memories about the exchange of correspondence with Marx. They had literally forgotten about it, and their categorical negative convinced the indefatigable Riazanov for years that he was on a false trail. However, in the summer of 1923, he learned from the Menshevik, Boris Nikolayevsky, in Berlin, that a letter from Marx had been found among the papers of the old Russian Menshevik, Paul Axelrod. A comparison of it with the old drafts discovered a dozen years earlier proved that it was indeed a final copy of a letter to Zasulich, the one that had actually been sent. It was published by Nikolayevsky in the original French a short time later, in his *Material for the History of the Revolutionary Movement*, based on P. B. Axelrod's archives.

With the scrupulousness and scholarship that distinguished him, Riazanov undertook to decipher the almost illegible text of Marx's original drafts, of which there were four. In fact, he started the painstaking job as early as 1913, in Vienna, aided by the late Bukharin; he finished it in Moscow after the Bolshevik Revolution. The original letter by Zasulich, the four drafts of a reply by Marx, as well as the final text, which was actually sent off, appeared in the original French text in the first volume of the *Marx-Engels Archives* issued by Riazanov, its founder, as the periodical of the then (1925) still authoritative Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow. Our translation is made from that text.

Three Fundamental Contributions

In this issue, we print, of course, Zasulich's letter and Marx's final and rather summary reply, but also, in full, the first of the four drafts found at Lafargue's. It is the most elaborate of them all. The repetitiousness—the document is a much-worked-over and much-corrected and re-corrected draft—in certain parts does not seriously dilute the richness of Marx's thought and the flavor of its expression. As for its

contents, comment is reserved for later on. It may suffice here to point out that so far as the literal point inquired about by Zasulich is concerned, it soon ceased to be the lively subject of debate in the Russian movement that it was when she wrote the letter. Only two years later, Zasulich acknowledged (in an introduction to a Russian translation of Engels) that the disintegration of the Russian rural commune was proceeding apace and inevitably, and that only remnants of it would survive the day of the socialist revolution against the growing capitalism of Russia.

Trotsky's "The Social Development of Russia and Czarism" is the first chapter of his own introduction to the first German edition of his book on the Russian Revolution of 1905. It was written in Vienna in 1908 and 1909, based roughly on his Russian book of 1907, *Our Revolution*. In response to numerous requests, Trotsky permitted the publication of a new German edition in 1922. This one was much more elaborate than the original and contained much supplementary material, including Trotsky's pre-war polemics against the Mensheviks on the character of the Russian Revolution, etc. The new edition was published by the Communist International, first in German and then in French. This fact has special significance inasmuch as it is in this collection of books and articles that Trotsky developed his famous theory of the permanent revolution. Despite all its polemical liveliness and theoretical persistency, it evidently occurred to nobody in the Russian party or the International, in 1922 and while Lenin was still alive, to provide the Trotsky work with commentaries charging—as soon became first the fashion and then the obligation of all who said anything in the Russian party or the International—that his old views on the permanent revolution were in diametrical opposition to Leninism, represented an "underestimation of the peasantry," and (later in the Stalinist degeneration of Russia) constituted downright counter-revolutionism. The chapter on the peculiarities of Russia's development which we print in this issue is translated from the original German of almost thirty-five years ago.

From Lenin's works, we publish the principal sections of the political report he delivered on March 29, 1922, to the eleventh congress of the Communist Party of Russia, held in Moscow. Unfortunately, the speech as a whole, to say nothing of the speech plus the concluding remarks, is much too long to be published here in its entirety. We have sought to select the most important, the most interesting and the most germane passages—that is, those most germane to an understanding of Russia then and Russia now.

This report was Lenin's last public appearance before the Russian party, and took place between two long-lasting periods of that illness which was to prove fatal less than two years later. In fact, it was his last speech but one—the one he delivered at the end of the same year on the prospects of the world revolution at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International. It is not too much, then, to say that this report, exceptionally lengthy, detailed, all-embracing, and caustically candid—even for a Lenin report—may be considered as a political testament to the party.

* * *

Gauging Russia's Historical Development

None of the three documents we publish is a substitute for the much more thorough analysis that must be made if we are to understand the by no means simple phenomena of Russia's development from Czarist primitiveness to the Bolshevik Revolution and from the revolution to the Stalinist counter-revolution. Yet, each of them, in its own way and for its own time, provides broad and precious clues to an understanding of this development. And specifically, let us add, to an understanding of the present Stalinist state, the nature of which has caused so much continuing controversy in all political circles.

What is emphatically underlined by Marx, Trotsky and Lenin (more by the first two than by Lenin, but only because of the different aspects of the subject they cover) is the *peculiarity* of Russia's position and of her course of development. In 1926, Stalin, in defending the theory of "socialism in a single country," made the utterly absurd assertion that Marx and Engels *could not* have known of the law of unevenness of historical development. As Marx's letter shows so clearly, he was more than sufficiently aware of the existence of this law and of its operation, and it is the very essence of this feature of historical evolution that he emphasizes in his reply to Zasulich.

The particular contemporary interest of Marx's comment on what is singular in Russia's evolution lies in its insistence on excluding Russia from the "historical fatality" of the evolution of the Western European countries—although, be it noted, that even for the latter countries Marx surrounds the phrase with somewhat sardonic quotation marks. This clue to an understanding of Russia is at the same time essential to an understanding of the Marxian theory of historical development.

It is simply a vulgarization of Marxism—not to say outright ignorance of it—to hold that every country must at one time or another pass through the same stages of social development, spending more or less the same periods of time in each. On the basis of this vulgarization, the Mensheviks broke their necks in the Russian Revolution, for their view boiled down to the dogma that semi-feudal Czarist Russia must first pass through a prolonged period of capitalist development before it matured for the socialist assault of the proletariat. On the same grounds, social-reformist theoreticians obstinately denied the proletarian character of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The advanced countries hold up to the backward countries a mirror of their own future, they mumbled after Marx. But they did not understand that this held true "in general" and only with "all other things being equal."

It is evident—and not only from his letter to Zasulich—that Marx held firmly to the view that some countries, given special conditions in their historical development, or, as he wrote to Zasulich, "thanks to a unique combination of circumstance," may *leap over* stages which other countries, under other conditions, were obliged to labor through; or that some countries can pass at terrific speed through stages in which other countries stagnate or advance only imperceptibly.

A Concept of History

To this view, Marx of course linked inseparably his not less fundamental conception that there is an historical *line* of development, and that all countries tend to proceed along this line; that there is, as Engels put it, a "logical order" in

history. But to substitute this vitally important generalization for the necessity of a concrete analysis of each country at each stage of its development does violence to historical science, to the sum and substance of Marxism itself.

Marxist science bases itself on the fact that the specific peculiarities of each country are not "merely supplementary" to those of its characteristics that it has in common with all others, but rather "are a unique combination of the basic features of the world process." These specific peculiarities do not make it possible for any country to separate itself hermetically from the world in which it lives or from the main movement of historical development. But they do make possible *leaping-over stages*; they do make possible *historical reversions*; they do make possible *breaks* in the main line of development, *combined formations*, and even unprecedented (that is, exception, mongrel) social phenomena not provided for in historical forecasts but produced by historical *side-leaps* of greater or lesser duration and durability.

It was not the realization of these fundamentals of Marxism that distinguished Trotsky from the other Russian Marxists, for Lenin was equally aware that Marxism is not a "supra-historical doctrine." It was Trotsky's successful application of these fundamentals to the concrete analysis of the social forces under Czarism that produced the bold and clairvoyant theory of the permanent revolution, so strikingly confirmed in 1917.

In the extremely interesting chapter from his early work which we reproduce is to be found a forceful parallel between the rôles of Czarist bureaucracy and Stalinist bureaucracy—a parallel, not more—which throws much light on an appraisal of the latter. Keeping in mind the difference in historical levels, it is nevertheless notable that in both cases an absolutist bureaucracy (Stalin's of course, is truly totalitarian in comparison either with Peter's, Katherine's or Nikolai's), monopolizing the positions of power and all privilege, utterly brutal, barbaric and reactionary in its methods, found it necessary, in the interests of self-preservation and self-aggrandizement, to develop enormously the productive forces, at least up to a certain point, by an "unbroken chain of heroic efforts."

From the similarities between the two autocracies, the incautious reader may draw unwarranted conclusions. Czarism kept the capitalist class away from control of the state power which was reserved, by and large, for the bureaucracy; yet it developed capitalist society and strengthened the social power of the bourgeoisie. Reasoning analogically, Stalinist bureaucracy monopolizes the state power and keeps the proletariat at arm's length politically; yet it develops and protects state property and thus strengthens the social power of the proletariat.

Bourgeois and Proletarian Rule

The conclusion is based on rationalism, and not even of a high quality. The social rule of the bourgeoisie may be preserved and even expanded without political power being in its hands. That has been demonstrated a hundred times in capitalist society and is not hard to understand. The régime that maintains or strengthens private property, by that very token maintains and strengthens the social rule of the bourgeoisie in whose very concrete hands this very concrete private property, and its not inconsiderable fruits, are always to be found.

The social rule of the proletariat is different not merely because it is a different class in power, but because the nature of its rule is fundamentally different *in type*, in quality, from

that of all preceding ruling classes. The proletariat owns social property through the state, in the form of state property, established by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. That is the *only* way it can own it. Its *social* power, its *social* rule, can therefore be maintained only if it "owns" the state, that is, only if it has decisive political power. Without it, the proletariat is once more the exploited and oppressed class in society.

Failure to understand this *qualitative* difference between the social rule of the proletariat and that of *all* preceding classes (for all of the others were private-property-owning classes), is what renders untenable the point of view of those who hold that Russia today is a workers' state of one kind or another. It is this failure that also renders incomprehensible the fact that while state property, under the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia, has been enormously expanded and strengthened, above all at the expense of bourgeois private property, the social and economic position, the social power, of the working class has deteriorated at a catastrophic rate; whereas, the strengthening of private property, be it under the rule of the first Bonapartist bureaucracy in France, the Czarist bureaucracy in Russia, or the Prussian bureaucracy in Germany, resulted in the consolidation of the economic and social position, the social power, of the bourgeoisie.

The Character of Stalinism

In Russia, it is the social rule of the collectivist bureaucracy that has been consolidated. The causes of the rise of this unique new class, the nature of its rule, are dealt with elsewhere in this issue. It is enough for the moment to point here to its earliest origins, as reflected in the disturbed observations by Lenin at the Eleventh Party Congress.

It is of course idle to speculate on how Lenin would characterize the present-day Stalinist bureaucracy. His remarks would in any case not be very complimentary. What is important is the fact that as early as 1922 (in fact, even earlier) Lenin displayed growing concern over the burgeoning bureaucracy and over the machine (that is, the state apparatus) which was moving in "God knows what direction," except the one toward which the driver was steering it. It is not at all

exaggerated to say that the last two cruelly afflicted years of his life were devoted almost wholly to stemming the rising tide of bureaucratism. All his efforts, detailed in many of the writings of Trotsky, were aimed with increasing persistency at Stalin, whose qualities suited him for the rôle of symbol and embodiment of the bureaucratic counter-revolution to come. Death cut short his efforts. The unequal struggle was continued by Trotsky and the Opposition.

Noteworthy, too, are Lenin's remarks on the rôle of "state capitalism" in Russia, a subject on which no little confusion has been created. Lenin calls special attention to the fact that what he proposed to establish under the name of "state capitalism" was not at all what had always been understood by the term in the Marxian movement before. He was entirely correct in making this radical distinction, which was so necessary that Trotsky at the time was reluctant to speak of the "concessions" and the "mixed enterprises" as state capitalism in any sense, precisely because of the confusion it might cause.

Important to us contemporarily is the fact that in spite of Lenin's hopes and expectations, this unique form of "state capitalism" never acquired any substantial significance in Soviet economy, either during or after his time. Developments took an entirely different turn. Petty, atomized agriculture was lumped together into huge collectivized farms by the most brutal and reactionary methods; at the same time, and with the same methods, the Stalinist bureaucracy wiped out all remnants of "state capitalism," and vastly extended and strengthened state property, collectivized property. Russia did not take the road back to private property and capitalism; it did not move ahead along the road to truly socialized property and socialism. Due to a "unique combination of circumstances," it branched off the main historical line and produced a reactionary monstrosity, the Stalinist state, bureaucratic collectivism.

What its place is in history, what it means for the future of other states, how durable it is—these questions are by no means simple to answer. It is the task of the Marxists to probe them to the bottom, and provide in reply more effective means of attaining our unaltered goal.

M. S.

The Marx - Zasulich Correspondence

Feb. 16, 1881.
Geneva.
Rue de Lausanne, No. 49
L'Imprimerie polonaise.

Honored Citizen!

You must be aware that your *Capital* enjoys a great popularity in Russia. In spite of the confiscation of the edition, the few copies that remained are read and re-read by most fairly educated people of our country; there are serious people who study it. But what you are probably unaware of is the rôle that your *Capital* plays in our discussions on the agrarian question in Russia and on our rural commune. You know better than anyone else how urgent this question is in Russia. You know what Chernichevsky thought of it. Our advanced literature, like the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*, for example, continues to develop his ideas. But this question is a question of life or death, in my opinion, above all for our Socialist Party. In one way or another, the personal destiny of our revolutionary socialists depends on what you have to say

on this question. One of two things: either this rural commune, freed from the inordinate demands of the public treasury, from payments to the lords of the manor and from despotic administration, is capable of developing along the socialist path, that is, of gradually organizing its production and its distribution of the products on collectivist bases. In this case the revolutionary socialist must sacrifice all his strength to the liberation of the commune and to its development.

If, on the contrary, the commune is doomed to perish, there remains nothing for the socialist, as such, to do but devote himself to more or less arbitrary calculations in order to learn in how many decades the land of the Russian peasant will pass out of his hands and into those of the bourgeoisie, in how many centuries, perhaps, capitalism will reach in Russia the development it has attained in Western Europe. They will then have to conduct propaganda only among the workers of the towns who will be continually swamped in the mass

of peasants who, as a result of the dissolution of the commune, will be thrown on the streets of the big cities in the search of hire.

In recent times we often hear it said that the rural commune is an archaic form which history, scientific socialism, in a word, everything that is beyond dispute, has condemned to doom. The people who preach this call themselves your pre-eminent disciples: "Marxists." Their strongest argument is often: "Marx says so."

"But how do you deduce that from his *Capital*? He does not deal in it with the agrarian question and does not speak of Russia," it is objected.

"He would have said so had he spoken of our country," reply your somewhat over-rash disciples. You will therefore understand, Citizen, the extent to which your opinion on this question interests us and what a great service you would be doing us by expounding your ideas on the possible fate of our rural commune and on the theory of the historical necessity of every country of the world passing through all the phases of capitalist production.

I take the liberty of begging you, Citizen, in the name of my friends, to be kind enough to do us this service.

If time does not permit you to expound your ideas on these questions in a fairly detailed manner, then oblige us at least by doing it in the form of a letter which you would allow me to translate and to publish in Russia.

Accept, Citizen, my respectful greetings.

VERA ZASULICH.

Karl Marx to Vera Zasulich (First Concept)

1. In dealing with the genesis of capitalist production, I have said that at its foundation lies "the radical separation of the producer from the means of production" (*Capital*, page 315, col. 1, French edition) and that "the basis of this whole evolution is the *expropriation of the agriculturists*. It has as yet been radically accomplished only in England. . . . But *all the other countries of Western Europe* are going through the same movement." (*L.c.*, col. II.)

I have thus *expressly* restricted the "historical fatality" of this movement *to the countries of Western Europe*. And why? Compare, if you please, chapter XXXII, where it says:

The "movement of elimination transforming the individual and scattered means of production into socially-concentrated means of production, changing the pigmy property of the many into the huge property of the few, this dolorful and appalling expropriation of the working people, there are the origins, there is the genesis of capital. . . . *Private property*, based upon personal labor . . . is supplanted by *capitalist private property*, based upon the exploitation of the labor of others, upon wage labor" (page 340, col. II.)

Thus, in the last analysis, there is *the transformation of one form of private property into another form of private property*: (the western movement). The land in the hands of the Russian peasants, never having been *their private property*, how could this development apply?

2. From the historical point of view the only serious argument pleaded in favor of the *fatal dissolution* of the commune of the Russian peasants, is as follows:

By going far back, we find everywhere in Western Europe common property of a fairly archaic type; it disappeared everywhere with social progress. Why should it succeed in escaping the same fate only in Russia?

I reply: Because in Russia, thanks to a singular combina-

tion of circumstances, the rural commune, still established on a national scale, can gradually extricate itself from its primitive characteristics and develop directly as an element of collective production on a national scale. It is only thanks to the contemporaneity of capitalist production that it can appropriate from it all its positive acquisitions without passing through its hideous vicissitudes. Russia does not live isolated from the modern world; neither is it the prey of a foreign conqueror, like the East Indies.

If the Russian admirers of the capitalist system deny the *theoretical* possibility of such an evolution, I would put to them the question: In order to exploit machinery, steamships, railroads, etc., was Russia forced, like the West, to pass through a long period of incubation of machine industry? Let them further explain to me how they managed to introduce in their midst, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole mechanism of exchange (banks, credit societies, etc.), whose elaboration cost the West centuries?

If, at the time of the emancipation, the rural communes had promptly been placed in conditions of normal prosperity; if thereupon the immense public debt, paid for the most part at the cost and expense of the peasants, with the other enormous sums furnished through the medium of the state (and always at the cost and expense of the peasants) to the "new pillars of society" now turned into capitalists—if all these expenditures had served the *further development* of the rural commune, then nobody would dream today of "the historical fatality" of the annihilation of the commune: everybody would recognize in it the element of the regeneration of Russian society and an element of superiority over the countries still enthralled by the capitalist régime.

Another circumstance favorable to the preservation of the Russian commune (in the course of development), is that it is not only the contemporary of capitalist production, but it has outlived the epoch when the social system appeared still intact, that it finds it, on the contrary, in Western Europe as well as in the United States, in combat with science, with the masses of the people, with the very productive forces which it generates. In a word, it finds it in a crisis which will end only by its elimination, by a return of modern societies to the "archaic" type of common property, a form in which—as is said by an American author* in no way suspect of revolutionary tendencies, supported in his labors by the Washington government—"the new system" toward which modern society tends "will be a revival in a superior form of an archaic social type." Hence we must not let ourselves be frightened too much by the word "archaic."

But in that case it would at least be necessary to know its vicissitudes. We know nothing about them. In one way or another, this commune perished in the midst of incessant foreign and internal wars. It probably died a violent death when the Germanic tribes came to conquer Italy, Spain, Gaul, etc. The commune of the archaic type was already no longer in existence. Nevertheless, its *natural vitality* is proved by two facts. There are scattered exemplifications of it which have survived all the vicissitudes of the Middle Ages and have been preserved to this day, for example, in my birthplace, the district of Trier. But what is most important, it has so well imprinted its own characteristics upon the commune that supplanted it—the commune where the tillable land has become private property, while the forests, pastures, wastelands, etc., still remain communal property—that Maurer, in deciphering

*The reference is to L. Morgan, *Ancient Society*, London, 1877,—D. R.

this commune of secondary formation, was able to reconstruct the archaic prototype. Thanks to characteristic traits borrowed from the latter, the new commune, introduced by the Germans in all the conquered countries, became the only hearth of freedom and of popular life throughout the Middle Ages. If, after the epoch of Tacitus, we know nothing of the life of the commune, nor of the manner or the time of its disappearance, we know at least the point of departure, thanks to the account of Julius Cæsar. In his time the land was already being redistributed annually, but among the gens and tribes of the Germanic confederations and not yet among the individual members of a commune. The *rural commune* is therefore the product in Germania of a more archaic type, it was the product there of a spontaneous development instead of being imported ready-made from Asia. There—in the East Indies—we encounter it also and always as the *last stage* or the last period of the archaic formation.

In order to judge the possible destinies from a purely theoretical point of view, that is, always supposing normal conditions of life, I must now designate certain characteristic traits that distinguish the "agriculture commune" from the more archaic types.

In the first place, all the previous primitive communities rest upon the natural kinship of their members; by breaking this strong but narrow bond, the agricultural commune is more capable of adapting itself, of extending itself and of sustaining contact with foreigners.

Then, in it, the house and its complement, the court, are already the private property of the agriculturist, whereas long before agriculture was even introduced the common house was one of the material bases of the preceding communities.

Finally, while the tillable land remains communal property, it is periodically divided among the members of the agricultural commune, so that each agriculturist exploits on his own count the fields assigned to him and appropriates their fruits individually, whereas in the more archaic communities production took place in common and only its product was distributed. This primitive type of collective or coöperative production was, of course, the result of the weakness of the isolated individual and not of the socialization of the means of production.

It is easy to understand that the dualism inherent in the "agricultural commune" can endow it with a vigorous life, for on the one hand common property and all the social relations that flow from it make its situation solid, at the same time that the private house, the piecemeal cultivation of the tillable land and the private appropriation of the fruits admit a development of the personality, incompatible with the conditions of the more primitive communities. But it is no less evident that the same dualism can become in time a source of decomposition. Apart from all the influences of hostile surroundings, the mere gradual accumulation of personal [movable] wealth which begins with wealth in cattle (and admitting even wealth in serfs), the increasingly pronounced rôle that the movable element plays in agriculture itself and a mass of other circumstances, inseparable from this accumulation, but which it would lead me too far afield to expound, will act like a solvent of economic and social equality, and will create inside the commune itself a conflict of interests which entails in the first place the conversion of the tillable land into private property and which ends by the private appropriation of the forests, pastures, wastelands, etc., which have already become communal *annexes* of private property. It is by that token that the "agricultural commune" appears

everywhere as the *latest type* of the archaic formation of society and that in the historical movement of Western Europe, ancient and modern, the period of the agricultural commune appeared as the transition period from the primary to the secondary formation. But does this mean that in all circumstances the development of the "agricultural commune" must follow this route? Not at all. Its constitutive form admits this alternative: either the element of private property which it implies will triumph over the collective element, or the latter will triumph over the former. Everything depends upon the historical milieu in which it finds itself situated. . . . These two solutions are *a priori* possible, but for each one entirely different historical milieux are obviously needed.

3. Russia is the only European country where the "agricultural commune" has maintained itself on a national scale down to the present day. It is not the prey of a foreign conqueror like the East Indies. Neither does it live isolated from the modern world. On the one hand, the common ownership of the land permits it to transform piecemeal and individualistic agriculture directly and gradually into collective agriculture, and the Russian peasants already practice it in the undivided grasslands; the physical configuration of its soil invites mechanized exploitation on a vast scale; the familiarity of the peasant with the *artel* contract facilitates for him the transition from piecemeal to coöperative work, and finally Russian society which has so long lived at his expense, owes him the advances necessary for such a transition. On the other hand, the *contemporaneity* of Western production, which dominates the world market, permits Russia to incorporate in the commune all the positive acquisitions elaborated by the capitalist system without passing through its Caudine forks.

If the spokesmen of the "new pillars of society" deny the *theoretical* possibility of the indicated evolution of the modern rural commune, they should be asked if Russia was forced, like the West, to pass through a long period of incubation of machine industry in order to arrive at machines, steamships, railroads, etc.? They should be asked further how they managed to introduce in their midst, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole mechanism of exchange (banks, stock companies, etc.) whose elaboration cost the West centuries?

There is one characteristic of the "agricultural commune" in Russia which afflicts it with weakness, inimical in every sense. It is its isolation, the lack of contact between the life of one commune and that of the others, this *localized microcosm*, which is not encountered everywhere as an immanent characteristic of this type but which, where it does exist, has caused the rise over the communes of a more or less central despotism. The federation of the Russian republics of the North proves that this isolation, which seems to have been primitively imposed by the vast expanse of the territory, was in large part consolidated by the political destinies that Russia had to undergo since the Mongol invasion. Today it is one of the easiest obstacles to eliminate. It would be necessary simply to substitute for the *volost*, a governmental institution, an assembly of peasants chosen by the communes themselves and serving as the economic and administrative organ of their interests.

A very favorable circumstance, from the historical point of view, to the preservation of the "agricultural commune" in the course of its further development, is that it is not only the contemporary of Western capitalist production and can thus appropriate its fruits without subjugating itself to its *modus operandi*, but that it has outlived the epoch when the capi-

talist system appeared still intact, that it finds it, on the contrary, in Western Europe as well as in the United States, in the struggle with the working masses and with science and with the productive forces themselves which it generates—in a word, in a crisis which will end by its elimination, by a return of modern societies to a superior form of an “archaic” type of collective property and collective production.

It is understood that the evolution of the commune would take place gradually and that the first step would be to place it in normal conditions on its *present basis*.

But facing it stands landed property, holding in its hands almost half, and the best part, of the soil, not to mention the domains of the state. That is the side from which the preservation of the “rural commune,” in the course of its further evolution, is intermingled with the general movement of Russian society, whose regeneration may thus be purchased.

Even from the purely economic standpoint, Russia can emerge from its agricultural [...] by the evolution of its rural commune; it would seek in vain to emerge from it by capitalized farming on the English model, which clashes with all the rural conditions of the country.

Disregarding all the miseries that presently afflict the Russian “rural commune” and considering only its constitutive form and its historical milieu, it is evident in the first place that one of its fundamental characteristics, common ownership of the soil, forms the natural basis of collective production and collective appropriation. In addition, the familiarity of the Russian peasant with the *artel* contract would facilitate for him the transition from piecemeal to collective work, which he already practices to a certain degree in the undivided grasslands, in drainage work and in other undertakings of a general interest. But for collective work to supplant piecemeal work—a form of private appropriation—in agriculture properly so called, two things are needed: the economic need of such a transformation and the material conditions to accomplish it.

As to the economic need, it will make itself felt to the “rural commune” itself from the moment when it is placed in normal conditions, that is, as soon as the burdens that weigh upon it are removed and its cultivable land receives a normal expanse. The time has passed when Russian agriculture asked only for the land and its piecemeal tiller armed with more or less primitive tools. . . . The time has passed all the more rapidly because the oppression of the tiller infects and sterilizes his field. It now needs coöperative work, organized on a large scale. As the peasant’s want of the things needed for the tilling of his three *desyatins* increases, will he be more advanced with ten times the number of *desyatins*?

But where are the tools, the manures, the agronomical methods, etc., all the means so indispensable to collective work, to be found? There is precisely the great superiority of the Russian “rural commune” over the archaic communes of the same type. It alone, in Europe, has maintained itself on a vast, national scale. It thus finds itself placed in a historical milieu where the contemporaneity of capitalist production imparts to it all the conditions of collective work. It is in a position to assimilate the positive acquisitions elaborated by the capitalist system without passing through its Caudine forks. The physical configuration of the Russian land invites agricultural exploitation with the aid of machinery, organized on a vast scale, managed by coöperative labor. As to the

first setting-up costs—intellectual and material costs—Russian society owes them to the “rural commune” at whose expense it has lived so long and in which it must seek its “regenerating element.”

The best proof that this development of the “rural commune” corresponds to the historical current of our epoch is the fatal crisis suffered by capitalist production in the European and American countries where it has had its greatest upswing, a crisis which will end by its elimination, by the return of modern society to a superior form of the most archaic type—collective production and appropriation.

4. In order to be able to develop, it is first of all necessary to live, and nobody can conceal from himself that at this moment the life of the “rural commune” is imperilled.

In order to expropriate the agriculturists it is not necessary to drive them from their land, as was done in England and elsewhere; neither is it necessary to abolish common property by a ukase. Try to seize from the peasants the product of their agricultural labor beyond a certain measure, and in spite of your gendarmerie and your army you will not succeed in chaining them to their fields. In the last stage of the Roman Empire, provincial decurions, not peasants but landed proprietors, fled from their homes, abandoned their lands, even sold themselves into slavery, all in order to be rid of a property which was no longer anything but an official pretext for squeezing them without mercy or quarter.

Since the so-called emancipation of the peasants, the Russian commune was placed by the state in abnormal economic conditions and since that time it has not ceased to bear down upon it with the social forces concentrated in its hands. Debilitated by its fiscal exactions, it becomes an inert object of easy exploitation by trade, landed property and usury. This oppression from without has unleashed within the commune itself the conflict of interests already present in it and has rapidly developed its germs of decomposition. But that is not all. At the cost and expense of the peasants, the state has given a hot-house impulsion to branches of the Western capitalist system which, without at all developing the productive preconditions of agriculture, are the most suitable for facilitating and precipitating the theft of its fruits through unproductive intermediaries. It has thus coöperated in the enriching of a new capitalist vermin, sucking the already impoverished blood of the “rural commune.”

. . . In a word, the state has lent its assistance to the precocious development of the technical and economic means most suited for facilitating and precipitating the exploitation of the agriculturist, that is, of the greatest productive force of Russia, and for enriching the “new pillars of society.”

5. Unless this concurrence of destructive influences is broken by a powerful reaction, it must naturally lead to the death of the rural commune.

But the question arises: If all these interests (I include the large industries placed under government protection) have found the present state of the rural commune to be profitable, why should they conspire deliberately to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs? Precisely because they feel that “this present state” is no longer tenable, that consequently the present mode of exploiting it is no longer in vogue. Already the misery of the tiller has infected the land which grows sterile. Good harvests are balanced by famines. Instead of exporting, Russia must import grains. The average of the last ten years has revealed not only a stagnant but a retrograde agricultural

*Undecipherable word; probably *cul-de-sac*. In the third draft the word in the corresponding place is: *impasse*—D. R.

production. Finally, for the first time Russia must import grains instead of exporting them. There is therefore no more time to lose. It is therefore necessary to come to a conclusion. It is necessary to constitute into an intermediate rural class the more or less well-off minority of the peasants and to convert the majority into proletarians and nothing more. Toward that end the spokesmen of the "new pillars of society" denounce the very evils inflicted upon the commune as so many natural symptoms of its decrepitude.

Since so many diverse interests, above all those of the "new pillars of society" erected under the benign empire of Alexander II, have found the *present state* of the "rural commune" so profitable to them, why should they come to conspire deliberately at its death? Why do their spokesmen denounce the evils inflicted upon it as so many irrefutable proofs of its natural decay? Why do they want to kill their goose with the golden eggs? Simply because the economic facts, whose analysis would lead me too far afield, have unveiled the mystery that *the present state of the commune is no longer tenable*, and that by the mere necessity of things the present mode of exploiting the masses of the people will no longer be in vogue. Hence a new one is needed, and the new one, insinuated under the most diverse forms, always comes down to this: to abolish common property, to let the more or less well-off minority of the peasants constitute themselves into an intermediary rural class, and to convert the great majority of the peasants into proletarians and nothing more.

On the one hand, the "rural commune" is almost reduced to the last extremity, and, on the other, a powerful conspiracy lies in waiting in order to give it the finishing stroke. To save the Russian commune, a Russian revolution is necessary. However, the holders of the political and social powers are doing their best to prepare the masses for such a catastrophe. At the same time that the commune is bled and tortured, its land sterilized and impoverished, the literary lackeys of the "new pillars of society" ironically designate the evils that have been inflicted upon it as so many symptoms of its spontaneous and incontestable decrepitude, that it is dying a natural death and that it would be a good job done to abridge its agony. Here it is no longer a question of a problem to resolve; it is quite simply a matter of an enemy to beat. It is therefore no longer a theoretical problem. To save the Russian commune, a Russian revolution is necessary. However, the Russian government and the "new pillars of society" are doing their best to prepare the masses for such a catastrophe. If the revolution takes place at an opportune time, if it concentrates all its forces to assure the free upswing of the rural commune, the latter will soon develop as a regenerating element of Rus-

sian society and as an element of superiority over the countries enthralled by the capitalist régime.

Karl Marx to Vera Zasulich (The letter Finally Sent)

March 8, 1881,
41, Maitland Park Road,
London, N.W.

Dear Citizeness:

A nerve malady that has attacked me periodically for the past ten years prevented me from replying sooner to your letter of February 16. I regret not being able to give you a succinct exposition, intended for publication, of the question that you did me the honor of proposing. It is months ago that I promised a work on the same subject to the St. Petersburg Committee. However, I hope that a few lines will suffice to leave you in no doubt on the misunderstanding with regard to my so-called theory.

In analyzing the genesis of capitalist production, I say:

"At the foundation of the capitalist system there is therefore the radical separation of the producer from the means of production... the basis of this whole evolution is *the expropriation of the agriculturists*. It has as yet been radically accomplished only in England... But *all the other countries of Western Europe* are going through the same movement." (*Capital*, French ed., p. 315.)

The "historical fatality" of this movement is thus *expressly* restricted to the *countries of Western Europe*. The reason for this restriction is indicated in this passage from Chap. XXXII:

"*Private property*, based upon personal labor... is to be supplanted by *capitalist private property*, based upon the exploitation of the labor of others, upon wage labor. (*L.c.*, p. 340.)

In this Western movement it is therefore a question of the *transformation of one form of private property into another form of private property*. Among the Russian peasants it would be necessary, on the contrary, *to transform their common property into private property*.

The analysis given in *Capital* thus offers reasons neither for nor against the vitality of the rural commune, but the special study I have made of it, for which I sought the materials in the original sources, has convinced me that this commune is the point of support of the social regeneration in Russia, but for it to function as such it would first of all be necessary to eliminate the deleterious influences which assail it from all sides and then to assure it the normal conditions of a spontaneous development.

I have the honor, dear citizeness, to be your devoted

KARL MARX.

Social Development of Russia

The Czarist State and Capitalism

Our revolution* has killed our "originality." It has shown that history has created no special laws for us. And yet the revolution in Russia bears a quite peculiar character, the result of the peculiarities of our social and historical development.

*It is a question here of the revolution of 1905 and of the changes that it brought about in the life of the Russian state and society: of the formation of parties, the rise of Parliament, the inauguration of open political struggle, etc.

It is not necessary to debate the metaphysical question of whether we are dealing, in the comparison of Russia with Western Europe, with a "qualitative" or a "quantitative" difference; but it is indubitable that the basic feature of Russian social development is its slowness and its primitiveness. Actually, the Russian state is not much younger than the European states. The commencement of Russian state life is put by the chronicles at the year 862, but the extremely slow

tempo of economic development, conditioned by the unfavorable natural position of the country and the low density of the population, held up the process of social differentiation and stamped our whole history with the hallmark of the primitive.

It is hard to say what the life of the Russian state would have been had it developed in isolation, only under the influence of internal tendencies. Suffice it that this was not the case. Russian social life—the further it proceeded, the more this was so—was subjected to the continuous pressure of the more highly developed social and state relationships of Western Europe. Since state relations to other countries played an outstanding rôle under conditions of poorly-developed trade, so also did the social influence of Russia make itself felt primarily through the medium of military technique.

The Russian state, which rose on a primitive economic foundation, came into conflict with state organizations which had developed on a higher economic foundation. Here two possibilities were presented: either the Russian state succumbed in struggle with the latter, as the "Golden Horde" succumbed in the struggle against the Muscovite empire, or else it outstrips the development of its own economic conditions by absorbing, under pressure from abroad, a relatively large portion of the national resources. For the first solution, Russian economy already proved to be *too far* from primitive. The state was not destroyed, but began to grow by a terrific exertion of the economic forces of the nation.

Up to a certain degree, what has just been said applies of course also to every other European state. But the latter based themselves in their mutual struggles upon approximately equal economic foundations; hence their development did not have to sustain so mighty an *external* pressure.

The struggle of the Muscovite empire against the Crimean and Nogai Tatars called forth a tremendous exertion of forces; but obviously not greater than the century-long struggle of England against France. It was not the Tatars who compelled the land of the Russ to introduce firearms and to create standing Guard regiments; it was not the Tatars who thereafter caused the institution of cavalry and infantry regiments. It was the pressure of Lithuania, Poland and Sweden. In order to be able to exist alongside of better-equipped foes, the Russian state was compelled to create special trades and arts, to employ military experts, to provide counterfeiters for the state, powder manufacturers, textbooks on fortifications, to found naval schools and factories, to establish privy counselors. Whereas the military instructors and the privy counselors could be ordered from abroad, the material resources had to be assembled at any cost from the country itself.

The history of Russian state economy is an unbroken chain of essentially heroic efforts, aimed at creating the resources for the military establishment. The whole governmental apparatus was built up and constantly reconstructed for fiscal purposes. It was its task to seize every tiny bit of accumulated labor and monopolize it.

In its search for resources, the government recoiled from nothing: it imposed despotic and always disproportionately high taxes upon the peasants, taxes to which the population could not accustom itself; it introduced the joint responsibility of the community; by pleading and threatening, by exhortation and violence, it extorted the money of the merchants and the monasteries. The peasants fled in all directions, the merchants emigrated abroad, and the censuses of the seventeenth century show a constant decline of the population. Out of a budget of a million and a half in that cen-

tury, some 85 per cent was expended for the army. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Peter was forced by the cruel reverses that he suffered to reorganize the infantry on a new model and to create a fleet. In the second half of the century the budget already reached the figure of sixteen to twenty millions, with from 60 to 70 per cent expended for the army and the fleet. These expenditures did not sink below 50 per cent even under Nicholas I. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Crimean War brought Czarism into conflict with the most powerful economic states of Europe—England and France—and the result was a complete reorganization of the army on the basis of universal military service. In the semi-emancipation of the peasants in 1861, the fiscal and military requirements of the state played a decisive rôle.

But the internal resources did not suffice. As early as Catherine II, the government found it possible to obtain foreign loans. The European stock exchange thenceforward became increasingly a principal source of the financial operations of Czarism. The accumulation of vast sums of capital on the Western European markets, which pushed down the rate of interest and sought favorable fields of investment, was thereafter to have a fateful influence upon the political development of Russia. The accelerated growth of the state organization now finds its expression not only in the excessive raising of indirect taxes, but also in the feverish increase of the state debt. In the years 1898 to 1908 it rose 19 per cent and at the end of this period it already reached the figure of nine billion rubles. The extent of the dependency of the state apparatus of absolutism upon Rothschild and Mendelssohn may be seen from the fact that interest payment on the debt now swallows something like a third of the net income of the state treasury. In the budget provisions for 1908, the expenditures for the army and the fleet, together with the interest on the public debt and the costs of liquidating the war amount to 1,018,000,000 rubles, that is, about 40.5 per cent of the total state budget.

Because the state, under the pressure of Western Europe, devoured a disproportionately large portion of the national production, it restricted the vital sources of the privileged classes and hampered their development, which was slow enough as it was. But not only that. It threw itself upon the meager means of existence of the cultivator, drove him away from the clump of earth he had hardly gotten used to living on, and in this way hampered the growth of the population and the development of the productive forces. Thus did the state protract the already slow differentiation of the estates by swallowing an excessive portion of the *surplus* product, and by appropriating a large portion of the *indispensable* product it destroyed the very productive forces on which it based itself.

At the same time, however, the state, in order to function, needed the hierarchical estates organization. That is why, while undermining the economic foundations of its growth, it endeavored at the same time to accelerate its development by state measures, and by employing its own power, to direct this process along lines beneficial to it.

In the interplay of the social forces of Russia, the diagonals moved far more in the direction of state power than was the case in Western European history. That exchange of services, at the expense of the working people, between the state and the upper social groups, expressed in the distribution of rights and duties, of burdens and privileges, brought the nobility and the clergy much fewer advantages in Russia than in the mediæval feudal states of Western Europe. Nevertheless, it

is a downright exaggeration, a complete destruction of all perspective, when Milyukov asserts in his history of Russian culture that whereas in the West it was the estates that created the states, with us it was the state power that created the estates in its own interest.

Estates cannot be produced by legislative or administrative means. Before a social group, with the aid of the state power, can crystallize out as an estate, it must already have been formed with all its social advantages. It cannot be manufactured according to an arbitrarily established hierarchical scale or according to a statute of the Legion of Honor.

What is indubitable is only the fact that in its relationship to the Russian privileged estates, Czarism always enjoyed an incomparably greater independence than did European absolutism which grew out of the estates-monarchy.

Absolutism attained the peak of its power when the bourgeoisie, which had raised itself on the shoulders of the third estate, was able to maintain itself as an equal counterweight to the feudal nobility. Such a situation, in which the ruling classes kept themselves politically balanced, assured the state organization the greatest independence. Louis XIV used to say: "*L'état, c'est moi!*" ["I am the state!"]. The absolute monarchy of Prussia appeared to Hegel as an aim in itself, as the realization of the idea of the state in general.

Czarism, in its endeavors to create a centralized apparatus of power, did not so much have to repress the claims of the privileged estates, as it had to battle against the barbarity, the poverty and the atomized state of the country, whose different parts lead an independent economic life. It was not the equilibrium of the economically ruling classes, as in the West, but their social weakness and political nullity that transformed bureaucratic absolutism into a self-sufficient organization. In this respect, Czarism appears as the intermediate form between European absolutism and Asiatic despotism—perhaps with a greater resemblance to the latter.

But while semi-Asiatic conditions made Czarism an autocratic organization, European technique and European capital provided this organization with all the resources of a European great power. This gave Czarism the possibility of interfering in all the political relationships of Europe, in which its fist began to play a decisive rôle. In 1815, Alexander I comes to Paris, restores the Bourbons to power and himself becomes the pillar of the "Holy Alliance." In 1848, Nicholas I obtains a splendid loan for the suppression of the European revolution, and sends Russian soldiers to suppress the insurrectionary Hungarians. The European bourgeoisie hoped that the Russian armies would continue to serve it against the socialist proletariat, just as it had formerly served European despotism against the bourgeoisie.

But historical development struck out in another direction. Absolutism shattered itself against capitalism, which it had itself so zealously promoted.

In the pre-capitalist epoch, the influence of European economy upon Russian economy was necessarily limited. The natural character of Russian economy protected it from the influence of higher forms of production. That is also why the structure of our estates did not reach complete development. But when in Europe itself the capitalist relationships predominated, when mobile capital became the missionary of the new economy and absolutism became the assistant of European capitalism out of sheer self-preservation, the situation was completely changed.

Those "critical" socialists who have lost their understand-

ing of the significance of the state power for the socialist revolution, can perceive even from the example of the unsystematic and barbaric activity of Russian autocracy the tremendous rôle that the state power can play on the purely economic field when it is working by and large in the direction of historical evolution.

By becoming the historical instrument of the capitalization of Russia's economic relations, Czarism strengthened its own position primarily.

In the period when the bourgeois classes, now pushed to the foreground, began to feel the need of the juridical and political institutions of the West, Czarism, aided by European technique and European capital, became the greatest capitalist enterpriser, the banker, the proprietor of the railroads and of the whiskey shops. It based itself on a centralized bureaucratic apparatus which, while completely worthless for the regulation of the new relationships, was able to develop a colossal energy in the realm of merciless suppression. The vast expanse of the country was conquered by the telegraph system, which invested the activity of the administration with a certain security, uniformity and speed, while the railroads permitted it to concentrate military power from one point in the country to another in a short time. The governments of the West, before the revolution, knew virtually no railroad and no telegraph system. In addition, Russian absolutism had a tremendous army at its disposal, and if it did not meet the serious tests of the Russo-Japanese war, it nevertheless continued to be adequate for domestic use. Neither the government of old France nor the European governments of 1848 had such an enormous power at their disposal.

The military and financial forces of Russian absolutism not only blinded the European stock exchanges, they also crushed the Russian liberal bourgeoisie, depriving it of all faith in the possibility of measuring its strength in open combat with that of the government. The power of the old régime seemed to exclude any possibility of a Russian revolution.

In reality, however, it was the contrary that happened. The more centralized a state and the more independent it is from the ruling classes, the sooner does it transform itself into an organization which imagines itself an aim in itself and stands above society. The more substantial the military-financial forces of such an organization, the longer and more successful may be its struggle for existence. A centralized state with a budget of two billions, a debt of eight billions and a standing army of a million, can still maintain itself for some time after it has ceased to satisfy the most elementary requirements of social development—not only the many-sided requirements of domestic administration but also those of external defense to which it owes originally its existence.

The administrative-military and financial power of absolutism, which enabled it to continue existing in contradiction to social development, therefore not only did not exclude the possibility of a revolution, as liberalism believed, but rather made the revolution the only possible way out. At the same time, this revolution was assured in advance of an all the more radical character, the deeper absolutism dug the gulf between itself and the masses of the people who were drawn into the new economic development.

Russian Marxism may be proud that it alone made clear the direction of the historical process at a time when liberalism pursued a utopian "practicalism" and the revolutionary "Narodniki [Populists] lived on phantasmagoria and faith in miracles.

LEON TROTSKY.

Lenin at the Eleventh Congress

A Speech to Russian Communists

We have achieved certain successes, even if they are of the most minor character, during the past year. But they are very slight. The main thing is that the conviction, the opinion is lacking which ought to be shared by every communist, which ought to be widely disseminated, namely, that the most responsible and devoted Russian communist knows less than any old clerk. I repeat: we must begin to learn from the beginning. If we understand this, we will pass the test. And the test is a severe one: it is a test that the market will impose, the imminent financial crisis. The Russian market and the world market, to which we are subordinated, to which we are bound, from which we cannot tear ourselves, will impose this test upon us.

That is how the question stands and only so, for the contest is severe, the contest is decisive. We had many methods and means of overcoming our political and economic difficulties and we can say proudly that we have thus far understood how to use all these methods and means in varying combinations, in correspondence with the varying situations. But there is no longer any way out for us. Allow me to tell you, without any exaggeration, that this time it is really a question of the "last and decisive struggle" not with international capitalism—we shall have many "last and decisive struggles" to fight out with it—no, but with Russian capitalism, which develops on the basis of small peasant economy and is supported by it. Here is where a struggle impends for us in the next period, whose exact date cannot be foretold.

In order to pass this test, we have at our disposal political power and a mass of all sorts of economic and other means, everything in the world except the necessary knowledge. It is knowledge that we are lacking. If we should draw this simple lesson from the experiences of past years and be guided by it throughout the year of 1922, then we shall overcome this difficulty too, although it is much greater than the previously mentioned difficulty, inasmuch as it lies within ourselves.

State Capitalism

In the question of state capitalism, our press and our party in general commit the mistake of falling into intellectualism, into liberalism. We speculate on how to conceive of state capitalism, and we peer into the old books. But there you find something altogether different written. What was written in them was about the state capitalism that develops under the rule of capitalism. There is, however, no book on state capitalism that occurs under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Even Marx did not write a word about it, and he died without leaving one exact quotation or any incontrovertible directions. So we are forced to help ourselves without the aid of quotations. I have tried to look into our press. In its preparations for today's report on the question of state capitalism it deals with something altogether different, it goes all around the actual subject. In all of economic literature, state capitalism is defined as the capitalism which occurs in the capitalist economic order, when the state power directly subordinates to itself this or that capitalist enterprise. We, however, have

a proletarian state, which is based upon the proletariat, whose organs are elected by the proletariat. Our state gives the proletariat all the political privileges and, through the proletariat, draws to itself the peasantry from below.

You recall that we began this work with the Committees of the Village Poor. That is why many, a great many, are confused by the term state capitalism. In order to avoid confusion, one must always keep in mind the fundamental fact that state capitalism, in the form in which we have it at the present time, has not been analyzed in any theory or anywhere in literature, for the simple reason that all the conceptions connected with this term are related to bourgeois power in capitalist society. What we have is a state that has left the capitalist track and has not yet shifted on to the new track. This state is not, however, ruled by the bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat, and we refused to understand that when we say "state," this state is ourselves, the proletariat, the vanguard of the working class. State capitalism is the capitalism that we will be capable of restricting, whose limits we will be capable of establishing; this state capitalism is connected with the state, and the state—its workers, most advanced part of the workers, the vanguard—is ourselves. State capitalism is the capitalism to which we must set definite limits, but limits which we have not yet understood to set. That is all. And what this state capitalism will be depends now upon us.

We have sufficient political power, perfectly sufficient; we even dispose of sufficient economic means. But it is knowledge that is lacking in that vanguard of the working class which is elected to do the direct execution of this work, to define, to fix the limits, in order to subdue others so that it may not be subduced. Only knowledge is what is wanting here. After all, it is an historically unprecedented situation that the proletariat, the revolutionary vanguard, possesses perfectly sufficient political power (in the last resort, even a little bit more than is necessary); at any rate, there is not the slightest lack of this political power. The nub of the question lies in our having to understand that this is a capitalism that we can and must allow, to which we can and must fix certain limits; that it is necessary for the broad masses of the peasants and for private capital to trade in such a way as to assure the ordinary course of capitalist economy and capitalist circulation which is needed by the people because you cannot today live without it.

You communists, you workers, you, the conscious part of the proletariat, who have undertaken to direct the state! Learn how to make the state, which you have taken over, act according to your will! A year has passed, the state is in our hands. But has the state acted in the past year according to our will in the field of the new economic policy? No. We do not like to confess this. But the state has not acted according to our will. How, then, has it acted? We are losing control of the machine. It would seem that the man sitting at the wheel is directing it. But in reality, the machine is not moving in the direction we want it to, but where something or other is directing it. This something or other cannot be ex-

actly defined. It is illegal, it is illogical, or it comes from God knows where. Is it speculators, or private capitalists, or both? Whatever the case may be, the machine is not running quite the way the one sitting at the wheel imagines. And very often the direction the machine takes is entirely different from the one that exists in the imagination of the driver. That is the fundamental thing to be thought of in the question of state capitalism, and what boils down to the same thing in practice. We must learn from the beginning in this fundamental field; and only after the necessity for this has become part of everybody's flesh and blood will we be able to guarantee that learn it we will.

An Evolution or a Tactic?

In this connection, I wanted to touch on the question of what the new economic policy of the Bolsheviks really is, an evolution or a tactic. The *Smena Vekh* [New Signposts] people have put the question that way. You know this group. It is a socio-political current that arose in the Russian emigration, at the head of which stand the most important leaders of the Kadets, a few ministers of the former Koltchak government, people who have come to the conviction that the Soviet power is building up the Russian state and that it must therefore be followed.

"But what kind of state is this Soviet power building up? They say, the communist state and they assure us that it is only a tactic: In a difficult moment, the Bolsheviks will get all they can out of the private capitalists, and later on they will take what they like. In reality, however, it is not a tactic, but an evolution, an internal transformation. They will end up as an ordinary bourgeois state, and we ought to support them. Different roads lead to the same historical goal."

Thus speculate the *Smena Vekh* people.

Many of them claim to be communists. But there are also most sincere people among them, including Ustryalov. He was, I believe, a Koltchak minister. He is not in agreement with his comrades and he says: "You can think what you like about communism; I contend, however, that this is no tactical question with them, but an evolutionary phenomenon." In my view, this direct declaration of Ustryalov is very useful to us. Unfortunately, we are obliged to listen every day to a lot of "communist lies." On account of my official position, I must listen to any number of them. We sometimes get downright sick to the death of them. Now instead of these lies we get a copy of the *Smena Vekh*, and it states: It is nothing of the kind with you. In reality, you are rolling right down to the ordinary bourgeois swamp, and many is the slogan that will be submerged in this swamp.

This is very useful to us, as it is no longer a mere variation of what we always hear about ourselves, but simply the class truth of the class foe. It is very useful to scrutinize a literary product which is written not because it is customary to write thus in a communist state, or prohibited to write otherwise, but because it is really the class truth which is expressed openly and crudely by our class foe. Ustryalov says: Although I was a Kadet, a bourgeois, although I supported the interventions, I am for supporting the Soviet power since it is adopting a path that will end with its becoming an ordinary bourgeois power.

This class truth is something very useful to us, which must, in my opinion, absolutely be reckoned with. This sort of writing by the *Smena Vekh* people is much better for us than their other way of writing, in which many of them claim to be

practically communists, so that from a distance you can hardly tell whether they believe in God or in the communist revolution. It must be said openly that such sincere enemies are useful to us. History knows all kinds of transformations. It is not serious political thinking to rely upon convictions, devotion and other excellent qualities of the soul. Only few individuals possess excellent qualities of the soul. The historical decision, however, is cast by enormous masses, who sometimes do not treat the few individuals too politely when they do not suit them.

There have been many such transformations, and that is why this sincere declaration by the *Smena Vekh* people should be welcomed. The enemy speaks the class truth and points to the danger that threatens us. The enemy aspires to convert this danger into something inevitable. The *Smena Vekh* people express the moods of many thousand bourgeois and Soviet officials who are participating in our new economic policy. This is the fundamental and real danger. Therefore our main attention must be directed to this question, to the question of who will really prevail over whom. I have spoken of the contest. There is no direct attack being made upon us. We have not been grabbed by the throat. We shall see what tomorrow will bring. Today, however, we are not being attacked with arms in hand. In spite of this, the fight against capitalist society has become a hundred times more violent and more dangerous, as we do not always see clearly who is our foe and who our friend. I spoke of the communist contest from the standpoint of the development of the economic and social forms. But this is no contest; it is a desperate, fierce struggle, and even if it is not the final one, it is one of the final life and death struggles between capitalism and communism.

Wherein Lies Our Strength?

Here too the question must be clearly formulated. Wherein lies our strength? What are we lacking? We have perfectly sufficient political power. You would hardly find anyone here who could show that the Communist Party did not or does not have enough political power in any practical question, in any serious institution. The fundamental economic forces, the big enterprises of decisive importance, the railways, etc.—all these are in our hands. No matter how numerous the leases to foreign capitalist concessionaires may be in some place, in general they are of minor importance, they play a pretty minor rôle. The economic forces in the hands of the Russian proletarian state are fully adequate to assure the transition to communism. Then what are we lacking? What we lack is clear enough. The ruling stratum of the communists is lacking in culture. Let us look at Moscow. This mass of bureaucrats—who is leading whom? The 4,700 responsible communists the mass of bureaucrats, or the other way around? I do not believe you can say that the communists are leading this mass. To put it honestly, they are not the leaders, but the led. Something has happened here that recalls the historical events we heard of in our childhood. We were taught: Once upon a time, a certain people conquered the country of another people and subjected this people. The conquering people was the victor, and the people whose country was conquered was the vanquished. That's obvious. But what happens with the culture of these peoples? Now the question is not so simple. If the culture of the victorious people is higher than that of the vanquished, it imposes its culture on the vanquished. But if the contrary is the case, the vanquished people imposes

its culture on the victor. Has not something similar happened in the capital of the RSFSR [Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic]? Have not the 4,700 communists in this city (almost a whole division, and only the very best comrades) been vanquished by an alien culture? This might give rise to the impression that the conquered possessed a higher culture. Nothing of the kind. Their culture was miserable, paltry, but nevertheless higher than that of our communist militants, inasmuch as they are not capable of managing. The communists at the head of the institutions (the skilled saboteurs often put them at the head in order to have a goat, a blind) are often fooled. This admission is very disagreeable, or at least not very pleasant. But I think it must be admitted. That is the political lesson of the past year, in my opinion. It is in this sense that the struggle will be carried on in the year 1922.

Will the responsible communists of the Soviets and of the party understand that they are unable to manage? If they do, then they will of course learn how, for it can be learned. But to learn, it is necessary to study. With us, orders and decrees are handed out in every direction. But the results do not correspond at all with what is ordered.

The contest that we put on the agenda by proclaiming the new economic policy is a serious one. It seems that it takes place in all the state institutions. In reality, however, it is only a form of the struggle between two irreconcilably hostile classes. It is only a form of the struggle of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This struggle is not yet at an end. This culture-struggle has not yet been fought out even in the central institutions of Moscow. The bourgeois specialists often possess a more thorough knowledge of their subject than our best communists, who have all the power at their disposal but who cannot move a step in spite of all their rights and their power.

I should like to quote from a pamphlet by Alexander Todorsky. The pamphlet appeared in Vezvegonsk, a city in the district of Tver, on the first anniversary of the Soviet Revolution in Russia, November 7, 1918, that is, a pretty long time ago. This Vezvegonsk comrade is apparently a party member. It is now some time ago that I read this pamphlet. I cannot therefore vouch for not making any mistakes in my description of it. This comrade tells how he went about the establishment of two Soviet plants and how he proceeded to draw two bourgeois into this work, that is, in the manner that was prevalent at that time, by threats of imprisonment and of the confiscation of all their wealth. They were invited to help set up the new plants. We know how the bourgeoisie was invited in 1918. [Laughter.] So it is not worth while dwelling on it in detail. We invite them now by other methods. The comrade wrote in his pamphlet: "It is not enough to defeat the bourgeoisie, to subdue it. Such a victory is only half the job. It must be forced to work for us."

These words are most noteworthy. These very important words show that even in the town of Vezvegonsk, as far back as 1918, the relationship between the victorious proletariat and the defeated bourgeoisie was correctly understood.

It is only a half-done job to defeat the exploiters, to render them harmless and to subdue them. About 90 per cent of our responsible militants in Moscow imagine that the whole job consists merely in that, i.e., merely in defeating them, rendering them harmless, subduing them.

It is a childish, perfectly childish, idea to think of carrying through the construction of socialism merely with the aid of the communists. The communists are a drop in the ocean of

the people as a whole. They will succeed in having the people follow their road only if they correctly define this road. But it is not enough to define this road correctly in so far as it is the general historical direction. As far as this is concerned, we have defined it absolutely correctly. The development of all countries confirms that we have defined it correctly. We must correctly define the road in our country, in our land. For the road to be right, we must prevent the interventions of the Whites and we must be able to give the peasants commodities in exchange for their grain. If not, the peasant will say: "You are a fine fellow, you have defended our fatherland; that is why we obey you. But if you don't know how to manage—go away!" Yes, that's what the peasant will say.

Only if the communists are able to build up economy with foreign aid, only if they learn from the bourgeoisie, only if they succeed in getting the bourgeoisie to travel the road they want—only then shall we be able to direct the economy.

The communists, however, think they know everything, because they are responsible communists, because they defeated people who were anything but clerks, because they beat off the enemies at the front who were anything but clerks. This prevalent feeling is ruining us. The disarming, the defeating, the overthrowing of the exploiters is the least important part of our work. This part has to be done. Our state political administration and our courts of justice ought to accomplish this with less apathy than they have shown up to now. They ought to bear in mind that they are proletarian courts, that the whole world is hostile to us and threatens us. But this part is not hard. By and large, we have learned how to do it. The activity in connection with it ought to be tightened up a little, but this will not be hard.

The second part of our work consists in our getting the elements which are numerically much stronger than we and which are working with us, to work with us in such a way that we are able to watch and understand their work, to see to it that it is something useful to communism. It is necessary to attain this so that communism is built up with foreign aid, so as to be able to realize in practice the necessary collaboration with peasant economy, so as to satisfy the peasants to the point where they say: Hunger is painful indeed, difficult, hardly bearable. But I see that the government, although it is only beginning to learn, is providing us with practical, really tangible assistance. Here lies the nub of the present situation. Some communists have indeed understood and grasped this, but the wide masses of the party have not yet grasped the necessity of drawing the non-party people into the work. We have indeed written countless circulars about it and talked about it a lot. But what has happened for a whole year? Nothing at all. Out of the several hundred committees of our party, there aren't five capable of showing practical results. We haven't even approached the satisfying of daily needs, we are still living in the traditions of 1918 and 1919. Those were the great years, in which the greatest work of world history was accomplished. But to confine ourselves to looking back upon those years, and not to see the tasks that stand on the order of the days, means our ruin, inevitable, absolute ruin. . . .

The Foundation Must Be Laid

I think it is necessary to consider in a separate category the tasks of the revolution which we have completely resolved, which are an ineradicable part of the history of the world revolution, if we speak about our revolution and reflect upon its destiny. Our revolution shows such accomplishments.

Naturally, the Mensheviks and Otto Bauer, the representative of the Two-and-a-Half International, shout: "Their revolution is a bourgeois revolution." But we say that it is our task to carry the bourgeois revolution out to the end. A White Guard organ wrote: "For four hundred years dung had been accumulating in our state institutions, but the communists cleaned up the dung in four years." This deed is our greatest performance. What did the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists do? Nothing whatsoever. Neither here nor in progressive, enlightened Germany have they been able to clean up the mediæval dung. They reproach us for our greatest accomplishment. It remains to our eternal credit that we carried the revolution out to the end.

The air is filled with the approach of war. Even reformist unions are adopting resolutions against war and are threatening a strike in case of war. Not long ago, if I am not mistaken, I read in a paper that an excellent communist delivered a speech against war in the French Chamber of Deputies and pointed out that the workers will prefer an uprising to the war. The question cannot be put this way, the way we put it in 1912 at the time of the publication of the Basel Manifesto. Only the Russian Revolution has showed how a war is ended, at least in one country, how hard it is to terminate the reactionary war by revolutionary means. Reactionary, imperialist wars in all parts of the world are unavoidable. Humanity cannot forget that many millions of persons were killed, that many million more will be killed in the solving of such questions; and it will not forget it. The conquests of the Russian Revolution cannot be obliterated. No power on earth is capable of wiping out the achievements of the Soviet state. It was a world-historical victory. For centuries, states of the bourgeois type were set up. For the first time, the form of the non-bourgeois state was discovered. Perhaps our apparatus is bad. But it is said that the first steam engine to be invented was also very bad. It is not even known if it worked. That is not the most important point, but the fact that the invention was made. The first steam engine may have been unserviceable. But thanks to it, we have locomotives today. Our state apparatus may be bad through and through. But it has been created. The greatest historical invention has been made. Let all Europe, let thousands of bourgeois newspapers relate the poverty and disorder that reign among us: the Soviet state is attracting the world's working class in spite of that. These are our greatest conquests and they are ineffaceable. These conquests mean for us, the representatives of the Communist Party, merely the open door. We face the task of laying the foundation of socialist economy. Have we already solved this task? No, not yet. We do not even have the socialist foundation. The communists who imagine that we have it commit the greatest of errors. The firm, clear and sober distinction between what makes up the world-historical merit of the Russian Revolution and what we do so utterly badly, what we yet have to create, and what must yet be recast time and again—that distinction is just where the problem lies.

What Is the Main Point?

Political events are always very complicated and confused. They may be compared to a chain. To cling to the whole chain, it is not enough to hang on to a single link. You cannot choose artificially the link you want to cling to. What was the main point in 1917? The termination of the war. The whole country demanded it, and this demand dominated everything. Revolutionary Russia achieved the ending of the war for Russia. It cost a great effort. But the fundamental

need of the people was satisfied. Thereby our victory was assured for many years.

The people felt, the peasant saw, every soldier returning from the front understood perfectly that the Soviet power is a power that stands closer to the toilers, is more democratic. Although we did many stupid things and committed grievous mistakes in other fields, everything was right because we fulfilled this main task. What was the main point, the chief task in 1919 and 1920? Military defense. We had been attacked. The world-dominating Entente tried to strangle us. We needed no propaganda there: every non-party peasant understood what was involved. The big landlords came. The communists were able to fight against them. Therefore the peasants were in their majority for the communists, therefore we triumphed. The central point in 1921 was the orderly retreat. Therefore stricter discipline was necessary. The Workers' Opposition said: You underrate the workers; the workers should take the initiative to a greater degree. I say: The initiative should consist in carrying out the retreat in good order and in maintaining strict discipline. Anybody who had introduced panic and caused a breach of discipline would have ruined the revolution, for there is nothing harder than a retreat with people used to conquering, who are imbued with revolutionary ideas and ideals, and who in their souls consider any retreat almost as an abomination. The greatest danger is disorder. The most important task is the maintenance of order.

What is presently the central point, the main task? Our main task does not lie in the political field, not in the change of direction, although this idea has been widely spread in connection with the New Economic Policy. It is empty gossip. It is the most pernicious kind of babbling. We are beginning to get busy on the basis of the new economic policy, to reorganize our institutions, to establish new institutions. It is the most pernicious kind of babbling. *We have now come to the opinion that the central point, the main task, lies in people, in the selection of people. (This idea is the burden of my report.)* A revolutionist who was used to fighting against putting the main emphasis on petty detail work and on culture finds it hard to accept this idea. But we have reached a situation which we must appraise with political soberness. We have advanced so far that we are incapable of retaining all our positions, and we should not retain them. . . .

The main emphasis must be placed upon the selection of people, upon the control of the actual execution of orders.

We must not be afraid to admit, we must admit, that in 99 per cent of all cases the responsible communists hold offices they are not suited for, that they are incapable of carrying out the work allotted to them, and which they must now learn. If we understand this, and if we have sufficient time for it—so far as I can judge the general international situation, we shall have enough time in which to learn—we must do it whatever the cost.

N. LENIN.

March 29, 1922.

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Stalinist Diplomacy and the War

A Review of an Important Book

Of the endless stream of books on the world political and military situation contributed by correspondents returned from their respective journalistic safari, few have genuine merit. At best they are descriptive narratives of locales and personalities, the latter generally pictured as the moving forces of history. Occasionally there appears a book that endeavors to give more fundamental explanations of the political, economic, social and military events of the past several years. One of the better books recently published is *Duel for Europe*,* written by the son of Scott Nearing, the author of semi-Stalinist analyses of "Russian Communism" in the popular vein for American readers.

John Scott's book is an amanuensis of Russian foreign policy from the period of the Munich pact up to and including the Russo-German war. It is written with acute awareness of the diplomatic intrigue of these years and it was a fortuitous circumstance which gave him access to first-hand information of the events he describes. Scott lived in the Soviet Union for ten years. He was employed in Magnitorsk, married a peasant girl and settled down to live a Russian life, learning its language, the habits of its people and the life of the masses under the "Holy Father" in the Kremlin. Having lost his job during the purges, Scott found a position with the *London News-Chronicle*, where his knowledge of the Russian language served him in good stead. He was able to study the development of Stalinist policy at first hand, without the need of interpreters. He had good contacts and has written, in the opinion of this reviewer, a reasonably objective book.

Duel for Europe confines itself to the struggle in the eastern part of the Continent between Germany and Russia, which he personalizes as the struggle between Hitler and Stalin. Thus he writes in the preface:

This is the story of the duel between Joseph Stalin and Adolph Hitler for the continent of Europe. It is the story of the maneuvering, intrigue and deceit whereby each tried in advance to win the war against the other and against other lesser enemies in this wolf-eat-wolf world of ours.... It is not a nice story. Lying and blackmail, brow-beating and beguiling, these are the stock in trade of contemporary diplomacy. Those who try other means often come to no good end. Our own President Wilson tried to introduce fair play (!) into European diplomacy a quarter of a century ago, and ended up a brilliant failure internationally and a defeated and broken man at home. Stalin did not make Wilson's commendable mistake (!).... I want to make it clear that this story has very little to do with the Russian people, the hard-working and patient Mishas and Mashas.... They were busy working in mine and mill, behind desk and plow.... A few hundred, or at most a few thousand, men in Moscow were lying and bluffing, deluding and circumventing in the name of two hundred million simple, kindly men and women who were too busy.... It is an ugly story, one unworthy of the Russian people.

He hastens to add, however:

Yet it is the true story of a logical policy conceived in the interests of the Russian nation and carried through to its logical conclusion with relatively few mistakes.

In the very last statement one will find the answer to many "mystifying" aspects of Stalinist policy. The answer, as

we will endeavor to point out in a further elucidation of the material contained in Mr. Scott's report, is to be found in the bureaucratic nationalist self-interest of the present ruling class of Stalinist Russia, a self-interest that has not a single relationship to socialism and socialist internationalism.

Prelude to the Storm

As an essential introduction to the main theme of Russo-German relations, Scott refreshes one's memory by a brief résumé of the Munich period as seen by a resident of Moscow. The story is old, but worth repeating.

Hitler came to power in Germany as a result of a combination of economic and political factors: an acute national crisis, direct material aid of the German financial and industrial ruling class; assistance from a section of the British ruling class which sought, in its system of "checks and balances on the Continent," a counterweight to French domination; collusion between a section of the French ruling class and the German reactionaries, and finally and most important, the failure of the proletarian organizations in Germany to prevent Hitler's ascension to power, the militant communist section, at the behest of Stalin in order "to retain peace and the status quo."

Once in power, this agent of German imperialism proceeded to prepare for war, to bring about a change in the relationships between the powers, to obtain hegemony over the Continent and thence, world economy. The military rearmament of Germany, made possible by the circumvention of the provisions of Versailles, was carried through without opposition from the Anglo-French alliance, the latter willing to nip in the bud a prospective threat of war from Germany, the former giving assent to Hitler in order to achieve the aforementioned "checks and balances."

In addition, the British "appeasers" were quite willing to see war between the Soviet Union and Germany, in the hope that they would "devour each other" to the advantage of the British Empire. British policy sought to fortify Hitler's "*Drang nach Osten*."

Clearly, if Hitler was to engage in any campaign against the Soviet Union, it was necessary to solve the central European question, i.e., to secure the necessary geographical and material bases for such an attack. But it is necessary to bear in mind at all times, if one is not to lose sight of the *Realpolitik*, that Hitler's enemy was not Russia alone, but, in the last analysis, the Anglo-French and later the Anglo-American bloc. It was necessary to solve the central European question in relation to them also. And while it is impossible to know everything that transpired on Wilhelmstrasse, it is clear that once Hitler began to sweep up central Europe he was prepared to take his stand against France and England before trying his hand at the Soviet Union.

The history of these European events cannot be explained by saying that Hitler was more daring or a great deal more far-sighted than his opponents. It would be more correct to say that he was more desperate. The position of German

**Duel for Europe*, by John Scott. Published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston; 381 pages, \$8.50.

economy under world capitalism dictated his course. His early strength lay in his determination to open the offensive before the terrified British and French ruling classes could arm for a desperate war. When he took Austria, signed the Munich Pact and then proceeded to break the pact with the seizure of Czechoslovakia, he was then aware that he had nothing to fear from an England led by Chamberlain, or a France led by Daladier. Moreover, he was convinced that he could defeat them in an immediate war. And he was certain too, after so easy a triumph in Austria and in Czechoslovakia, that Poland was his for the taking. The foregoing "conjecture" is borne out by the succession of events.

At this point, new, strange and feverish diplomatic exchanges take place between Germany and Russia, not unknown to the British and the French. And here is where the Scott story unfolds itself.

On the Way to the Pact

After the Munich Pact, Stalin began to "explore the possibility of making a deal with Germany." A special representative, Kandalaki, was sent to Berlin for the purpose of making contact with Hitler. "In February, 1939, the Soviet military attaché in Germany said to General Keitel at a luncheon: 'If in the course of events Poland collapses, we cannot be expected to remain indifferent to the fate of our fellow Russians and Ukrainians in Poland.' It was the first real hint at a partitioning of Poland. Keitel reported the matter to Hitler, who ordered it hushed up. It was not a new idea."

The collective security policy having collapsed, Stalin made a turn in his diplomacy. Unprepared for a major war, he turned toward an alliance with Hitler. In his March report to the 18th Party Congress, he made no attack upon Germany. Stressing the Russian aim of peace, he launched into an attack upon France and England for trying to push Germany into a war with Russia. It was the famous "pull their chestnuts out of the fire for them" speech.

From then on the Soviet-German rapprochement moved rapidly. Astakhov, counselor of embassy in Berlin, "was already working on the outline of a Soviet-German agreement." The date: April, 1939! Kandalaki, the man sent to see Hitler, was apparently wiped out in the purges. According to Scott, Astakhov and Count von der Schulenberg, the German ambassador to the Soviet Union, laid the groundwork for the eventual alliance, naturally, at the specific instructions of their governments. At the same time, formally in any case, the Stalinist régime, through Litvinov, continued to call for collective security. And it is clear from what transpired that this was, at one and the same time, subterfuge and a safeguard, just in case Hitler did not come across.

The British, becoming aware of the negotiations in Berlin and Moscow, hastened to repair some broken fences, but in that diabolically clever British manner—they sent some second-rate diplomatists, in no position to guarantee anything, to seek some agreement with the Russians, yet at no time willing to come to a military alliance with Stalin, even though the French made a last-minute plea for such an alliance.

On April 19, Russia proposed a triple alliance against Germany, a system of mutual guarantees against attack. While the French ambassador urged acceptance, the British procrastinated, seeking a less costly bargain. But on August 23, when Ribbentrop arrived in Moscow to seal "the pact of blood," the British hastily announced that they were ready to accept the Russian proposals. Russia, however, signed up

with Germany, believing that she had obtained the best bargain.

Between April and August, when the Russo-German pact was signed, the Russians had negotiated large trade pacts with Germany. Litvinov was removed from office as a gesture of friendship to Hitler. After all, he was the outstanding advocate of collective security! In this interim period they had also raised the question of the Baltic States, the matter of Russia's defense and how necessary it was that these countries become Russian "spheres of influence." Obviously, this question was part of the discussions with Germany. The closer the date of signing of the German-Russian pact, the more intense became the negotiations between the military missions of the British-French and the Russians, but the former suddenly felt something completely hopeless in their labors. Relations between the Russian and German diplomatic staffs were uncommonly warm and friendly—as a matter of fact they seemed too exuberant. Their attitude to the French and British became sharper and even arrogant. It was precisely while the military missions were meeting that the pact was announced!

But, says Scott: "*The Soviet-German pact obviously did not result from the breakdown of the Anglo-French-Soviet staff talks, as the former had been initiated before the Anglo-French military talks were even well under way. . . . The Soviet-German pact had been initiated since the sixteenth of the month.* Scott reports that "from August 16 on it was just a question of playing the Anglo-French missions for as much as they were worth." (Emphasis mine—A. G.)

It seemed certain during these fateful months that there was no escaping war in Europe. No other intelligent explanation is to be discovered for the intense speed of negotiations carried on by the two contending imperialist camps with the Soviet Union. According to Scott, the British were ready in August to agree to any pact with Stalin. What, then, drove Stalin into Hitler's arms? The belief that England and France were incapable of thwarting Hitler's ambition, a conviction that they were unable to resist effectively the military might of fascist Germany. Stalin, in addition, believed that a pact with Hitler would permit him to stay out of the war while the Western powers engaged in mutual destruction. In the beginning at least he had faith in Hitler's assurance that, between Germany and Russia, there was no conflict of interest and that the two countries could co-exist to their mutual economic benefit.

The love feast that followed the pact seems incredible today. But it is only incredible to those who view capitalist diplomacy as an honest profession. For Hitler, the pact was a convenience; for Stalin, a vain hope that it would last for many years. But the real significance of the alliance is that it gave the German butcher a green light to open the war in the West. The Polish partition had already been decided upon. Hitler's eastern frontier was made safe. The holocaust began!

The New Allies at Work

Duel for Europe traces the right-about turn of Soviet policy subsequent to the signing of the pact. Now it was Great Britain which was the war-monger. France became the aggressor. The United States was behind these two bandits, waiting only to pick up the economic plums. The world was told by Moscow and her satellites throughout the world that it was not Germany which threatened the peace of the world, but Great Britain. Germany, we were informed, was a peace-lov-

ing nation. Nobody was going to force war upon these two friendly neighbors.

What did Russia gain from the pact? In the immediate sense, a little time. It also gained part of Poland and the Baltic states, Latvia, Lithuania and Esthonia. The stony seizures of these countries is a lurid tale of power diplomacy in the best tradition of imperialist politics. But the interesting thing about the seizures of these territories, says Scott, is that they were part of a Russo-German agreement on a division of geographic interests! The unpublished Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement provided for the partition of Poland, the occupation and incorporation into the Soviet Union, by means of a plebiscite, of Lithuania, Latvia, and Esthonia. In each instance some insignificant "insult" was discovered as the reason for occupation. In the case of Esthonia, the escape of the interned Polish submarine *Orzel* was the *cause célèbre* which led to the "invitation," much in the manner of Hitler calling Schuschnigg to Berchtesgaden, of the Esthonian Foreign Minister to Moscow, where he was told the fate of his country.

In the case of Latvia, *Pravda* accused that:

British politicians not only sought to utilize Latvia as a drill-ground and *place d'armes* for the plan of aggression against the USSR, they also tried to convert her into a colony, into an agrarian appendage of industrial England.

The incorporation of these countries naturally led to a bureaucratic "socialization" of their economies and their attachment to the Soviet economy. This "socialization" was hailed by the Stalinists (and some Trotskyists) as a victory for the international proletariat.

When the war broke out, Germany and the Soviet Union solemnly issued a joint declaration and put the blame upon England and France. Thus they thought they had given the verdict of history on the origin of the Second Imperialist World War. Moreover, the two governments announced that they would stand for no interference in eastern European events from England, France or any other power which had no business in that part of the world! Says Scott: "The Kremlin was convinced more and more every day that an era of prosperous Soviet-German coöperation was dawning." Relations between them could not have been better. And the building of Soviet fortifications in the West, Scott ascribes to Stalin's natural suspiciousness and "that at the time old Uncle Joe was mainly concerned about a British attack in case of a German defeat, or a combined attack after a negotiated peace." The villain in the drama was at all times England!

Prologue to the Finnish Dêbâcle

The crowning achievement of the Hitler-Stalin attack was the Russo-Finnish War. The general story is fairly well known. But *Duel for Europe* contains some interesting material that was not hitherto available. The original demands made upon Finland were predicated on the needs of Soviet defense. It asked for territorial concessions and special military rights for the Red Army. Stalin believed, after the way the Balticum was seized, that the Finns would surrender to any demand. But to his surprise, the Finns said nothing doing. What is more, they made it clear that they would resist any attempts by Stalin to achieve his demands by forcible means. In order words, the Finns were ready to go to war.

Scott shows first, that the Finnish masses backed the régime to the limit because they feared, above all, incorporation into the Soviet Union and life under Stalin. Truly, a beautiful testimonial to Stalin's internationalism! But the

author also adds that the Russian masses were completely indifferent to the subsequent barrage of charges in the Soviet press against the Finns; they believed them all to be lies!

How did the Russian leaders interpret Finnish resistance? It is only possible for the Finns to resist because some power or powers (England and France) have given them assurance of aid. That must be it because Germany would stand behind the Russians against the Finns. Scott is of the opinion that Stalin did not hold entirely to this thesis because he had less faith in the Soviet-German pact than did most Soviet officials. This, however, is conjecture, because Stalin never differentiated himself from the others in this stage of German-Russian relations. Moreover, the Germans gave practical proof of their support to Russia as the war unfolded in the North.

What did the bureaucracy expect from such a war? An uprising of the people and a mass welcome by the Finnish people of the Red Army. But the Finns mobilized their forces in reply to Moscow's further pressure. Then came the propaganda campaign to convince the Russian masses that Stalin was fighting a Finnish threat to the Soviet borders, particularly to Leningrad. Press attacks on the Finns appeared daily. There were attacks on the bourgeois Finnish leaders, gingerly spiced with many personal insults. Meetings were organized throughout the country to mobilize mass support. Hundreds of anti-Finnish resolutions were passed, but Scott relates:

...These resolutions were written by the central authorities and sometimes not even voted on at the meetings. The Soviet workers were and continued to be uninterested in Finland. I heard many plain Moscovites expressing shame at the recent Soviet-German partitioning of Poland and waxing indignant over the press demands for intervention in Finland. The Soviet people felt they had their hands full without fighting wars on someone else's territory.

Then Stalin resorted to a stale stratagem. Since the Finns would not accede to *all* the Soviet demands, it was necessary to invent some "incident." So it was charged that Finnish artillery had fired shells upon Soviet troops, killing three and wounding nine. A demand was made that the Finns withdraw their troops a distance of twenty or twenty-five kilometers. The Finns delivered a note in reply stating that an inquiry established that no shots had been fired from their side and that no Finnish guns "were within range of Mainilia," the scene of the firing. The Finns offered to coöperate in a joint investigation and were ready to discuss a *mutual* withdrawal of troops.

How the War Broke Out

When the Finns were convinced that the Russians meant war, they sent a long telegram to their legation, acceding to Stalin's demands. But before this telegram was completely translated and delivered into the hands of Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs Potemkin (a matter of a single night), he informed them that diplomatic relations had been severed "because of continued Finnish attacks on Soviet troops." During the same night the Red Army invaded Finland at several points. "Finnish appeals for reopening of negotiations fell on deaf ears."

How did the Russian masses react to this war? Scott writes:

All this was received coldly by most of the Soviet population. I heard many Russians saying: "We know about this artillery firing," with cynical significance. There was grumbling and sneering even in streetcars and in queues in stores. The workers assembled in meetings to pass fiery resolutions were indifferent. There had been too much provocation employed internally by the Soviet authorities during the purge of 1936-38.

Months later I was told by a Red Army man who had been stationed near Mainilia that no one in his unit had heard of the reported

incident on the twenty-sixth. From the standpoint of Realpolitik, it is unimportant, however, whether seven shells were fired at all or whether they came from Soviet or Finnish guns. The significant fact was that the Soviet public at large did not believe the government assertions.

This tragedy was followed by its farce. On December 1, from the fishing village of Teroiki came the announcement of the formation of a "Finnish People's Government" headed by Otto Kuusinen. "Within a few hours a pact was signed between the Soviet Government and the 'People's Government of the Democratic Republic of Finland.'" Note, not the Finnish Soviet Republic, but the Democratic Republic of Finland! Here again Scott gives us an interesting picture of the reaction of the Russian masses:

The whole Teroiki fiasco was so transparent and crude that the simplest Moscovites were skeptical, even amused, when *Pravda* front-paged a photograph of Stalin and Kuusinen after the signature of the pact. There was no radio station in Terioki which could have broadcast the declaration of the new government; Kuusinen had not been in Finland in two decades, and until quite recently had headed the Anglo-American section of the Comintern; and the Terioki government was laughed at by most Finns. These facts were widely known among Moscovites. It was the only instance I can remember in nearly a decade in Russia when large numbers of average Soviet citizens actually laughed at Stalin's government. At various times Stalin had been praised, maligned, worshipped, cursed, feared and hated, but the Teroiki performance made him an object of ridicule for many street car conductors, plumbers and other ordinary citizens.

The Moscow reply to the League of Nations, which subsequently expelled it from that body, explained: The Soviet Union was not at war with Finland or the Finnish people; it maintained peaceful relations with the "People's Government of Finland; Helsinki no longer represented the Finnish people, and all matters had been settled by the Moscow-Terioki pact." (!)

The war itself was a débâcle for the Russians. Ill-prepared, cocksure, disorganized, they suffered terrible defeats. The disorganization behind the lines gave expression to enormous inefficiency of the bureaucracy. A sharp crisis was registered in Moscow and Leningrad. Eventually overwhelming preponderance won for Stalin, but not without severe Soviet losses which greatly outnumbered those of the Finns.

What part did Germany play in this side-show to the main war? Trotsky had stated that the invasion of Finland was started in agreement with Hitler. Scott gives this analysis a qualified support. In any case he points out that it was within the accord of the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement.

He writes that, while the Germans gave no formal assistance to either side, "unofficially they were reported to have supplied the Red Army with the plans of the Mannerheim Line casemates and equipment installed by German firms." The Germans were anxious to avoid friction with the Kremlin because "Soviet oil and wheat deliveries to Germany were made as per schedule and other undertakings were fulfilled to the letter." Germany warned Norway and Sweden not to permit the passage of any Allied units or they would be faced with immediate occupation by Germany. On February 28, 1940, "the German Minister to Helsinki rendered further aid to Russia by informing the Finnish government that a formal Finnish request for military aid from the Allies would be followed by immediate German military action against Finland." And this was all the assistance Stalin, who feared direct Anglo-French intervention, wanted or needed from his German allies.

The Helsinki régime sued for peace and the Terioki farce was played out. It was a tragedy for Kuusinen. The peace

was negotiated between Helsinki and Moscow, i.e., with a government Stalin had "liquidated" and had refused to recognize. The Terioki government disappeared without a trace, unmourned and unwept.

Thus ended one phase of the war. Stalinism alienated another working class through the bureaucratic pursuit of an anti-proletarian policy to "increase its power, prestige and revenues." (Trotsky.)

Preparation for a New and Bigger Struggle

The Finnish war showed what dire consequences resulted from the army purge; it compelled a drastic reorganization of its structure, leadership and training. The mobilization of the military forces and a little diplomacy in the Balkans preceded the outbreak of war between Russia and Germany. In June, 1940, France fell and with that came the collapse of the Allied armies in Western Europe. Hitler's victory came with astonishing ease and great surprise even though his attempted knockout of England through an air assault failed dismally.

The victory of Germany in the West shocked the Russians, who believed that the war there would last for many years. When the struggle against England began to drag, indicating that no great battles would be fought, that the struggle would be protracted, the Kremlin became uneasy. Scott speaks with confidence that this marked a turning point for Stalin and began the immense preparations for war with Germany. At the same time the Russians continued to do everything in their power to placate the Germans. They lived up to the provisions of the pact by supplying Germany with many of her needs on time and in great quantities, much to the pleasant surprise of the Germans themselves. A list of materials sent to Hitler included wheat, rye, barley, oats, corn, oil, seeds, beans and peas, oil cake, starch products, sugar, dressed poultry, fish, leather, manganese ore, asbestos, magnesite, soda, wool flax, petroleum products, pharmaceutical and chemical products, zinc ore, wood, cotton and cotton waste, and copper. There is no doubt that these shipments constituted no small reason for enabling Hitler to carry on the war.

If the victory in the West marked a change in Stalin's policy it also meant a change for Hitler. He could not remain at the Channel endlessly. If he could not invade England, he was certain that England could not invade the Continent. Hitler began to look toward the East, especially when he noted the extended preparations made by Stalin for war. Russian seizure of Bessarabia, Bukovina, the pact with Yugoslavia and the pact with Japan, which was topped off by a "drunken" scene of friendship between Stalin and Matsuoko at a railroad station only served to hasten Hitler's attack on Russia. Russian economic overtures short of turning over parts of Russian economy to Hitler were rejected by him.

As part of the campaign to prepare for war, Stalin put Timoshenko at the head of the army. The absence of proletarian policy is further indicated by the "reforms" introduced under Timoshenko's direction. Scott reports the following changes in 1940:

June 23: Order that the men must salute their officers on or off duty, a practice which was discontinued with the victory of the October Revolution.

June 23: Order for tightening up guardhouse discipline "in order to make violators of army rules feel that they were being punished."

May: The establishment of a special commission "to award the ranks of general and admiral," which had been

abolished under the régime of Lenin and Trotsky, only to be reinstated by Stalin and Timoshenko.

August 12: Political commissars were abolished "as having fulfilled their function."

September 3: The five marshals received thirty-one-karat diamond stars "which rivalled in splendor anything worn by the officers of the old Czarist army."

September 23: Following military maneuvers throughout the country, *Pravda* wrote in praise of the Red Army that it was "following the best traditions of the great Russian armies of Suvorov and Kutuzov."

Early January, 1941: "Timoshenko issued an order providing for the reintroduction of the sword as part of the uniforms of Red Army generals and commissioned officers—a move calculated to raise the authority of these commanders." This was followed by an editorial in *Red Star* reporting on an order, which was not publishing, "giving commanders the right to use physical force in disciplining enlisted men."

For the Stalinist régime, for the bureaucratic collectivist class, these measures were necessary in order to prepare for war. Yet this is what the Cannonites call "Trotsky's Red Army."

The New Stage in the War

The rest of Scott's book covers more familiar material leading to the outbreak of war between Hitler and Stalin. Hitler, master of the Continent, had one job to perform to insure that his one remaining border was guaranteed, i.e., to

invade Russia and to destroy her colossal armies. After a year and a half, he is still engaged in that task. But the attack on Russia altered the line-ups in the war. Stalin is no longer the blood brother of Hitler. Now England is no longer responsible for the outbreak of war. Now Hitler has become the arch-enemy of humanity, while Stalin has become a great democrat allied with the "great democracies" of Great Britain and the United States. Now, the Red Army is fighting for "Mother Russia," for national independence, for world peace, for democracy. Now the imperialist war has become a "people's war." Now Russia has entered an alliance with her "arch-enemies" to re-establish the pre-war *status quo*.

What stands out in Scott's analysis of Soviet diplomacy and foreign policy is that indirectly he establishes its relationship to domestic policy. There is not a shred of socialism in Stalinist conduct; there is not the slightest trace of internationalism to be found. The theory of socialism in one country has found its fruition in Stalin's "national war." Given this condition, built upon fifteen years of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, the Soviet Union in the war is indistinguishable from her allies, either in her conduct of the war or in her war aims. That is so clear and has become so "natural" that nowhere in his extremely interesting and valuable survey does Scott find it possible to make any reference to the socialist policies, socialist thinking, or socialist aims of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Only self-deception can enable people to say that Stalin is "fighting the war of the workers," for the truth is concrete.

ALBERT GATES.

ARCHIVES OF THE REVOLUTION

Documents Relating to the History and
Doctrine of Revolutionary Marxism

An Answer to Stalinist Critics II

[Continued from the August Issue]

You ask: What is the explanation of those frightful passages quoted in the resolution. I shall have to answer this question. I must first, however, repeat that no single word has been quoted from the fundamental works which I wrote on the character of the revolution between 1917 and 1922, and complete silence is preserved on everything that I have written since 1922, even on that written last year and this year. Four passages are quoted. Comrade Stalin has dealt with them in detail, and they are referred to in the resolution, so you will permit me to devote some words to them as well.

The workers' movement is victorious in the democratic revolution. The bourgeoisie becomes counter-revolutionary. Among the peasantry the well-to-do elements, as well as a considerable section of the middle farmers, will become more "sensible," quieted down, and go over to the counter-revolution, in order that they may snatch the power out of the hands of the proletariat and the poor peasantry.... The struggle would be almost helpless for the Russian proletariat alone, and its defeat would be inevitable... were the European socialist proletariat not to hasten to the aid of the Russian proletariat.

I am afraid, comrades, that if anyone told you that these lines represented a malicious product of Trotskyism, many comrades would believe it. But this passage is Lenin's. The Lenin portfolio contains a draft of a pamphlet which Lenin intended to write at the end of 1905. Here this possible situation is described: The workers are victorious in the demo-

cratic revolution, the well-to-do section of the peasantry go over to counter-revolution. I may say that this passage is quoted in the last number of the *Bolshevik*, on page 68, but unfortunately with a grave misrepresentation, although the quotation is given in inverted commas: the words referring to the considerable section of the middle farmers are simply left out. I call upon you to compare the fifth Lenin portfolio, page 451, with the last number of the *Bolshevik*, page 68.

I could quote dozens of such passages from Lenin's works: Vol. VI, page 398; Vol. IX, page 410; vol. VIII, page 192. (I have not the time to read them, but anyone may look up the references for himself.) I shall only quote one passage from Vol. IX, page 415:

The Russian revolution (he is referring to the democratic revolution) cannot maintain and firmly establish its achievements by its own powers... if there is no revolution in the West. Without this prerequisite a restoration of the old order is unavoidable, both in communalization and in the distribution of land, for the small farmer will always form a support of restoration of any form of property or ownership. After the complete victory of the proletariat, the small farmer will inevitably turn against the proletariat.

(A voice: "We have introduced the NEP.")

True, I shall refer to that presently.

Let us now turn to that passage which I wrote in 1922, in order that we may see how my standpoint on the revolution in the epoch of 1904-05 had developed.

I have no intention, comrades, of raising the question of the theory of permanent revolution. This theory—both in respect of what has been right in it and of what has been incomplete and wrong—has nothing whatever to do with our present contentions. In any case this theory of permanent revolution, to which so much attention has been devoted of late, is not to the smallest extent among the responsibilities of either the opposition of 1925 nor the opposition of 1923, and even I myself regard it as a question which has long been settled *ad acta*.

But let us return to the passage quoted in the resolution. (This I wrote in 1922, but from the standpoint of 1905-06.)

After seizing power, the proletariat will come into hostile conflict with not only all those groups of the bourgeoisie which supported it at the commencement of its revolutionary struggle, but with the broad masses of the peasantry, with whose help it came into power.

Although this was written in 1922, it is put into the future tense: The proletariat will come into conflict with the bourgeoisie, etc., since pre-revolutionary views are being described. I ask you: Has Lenin's prognosis of 1905-06, that the middle peasantry will go over to counter-revolution to a great extent, proved true? I maintain that it has proved true in part. (Voices: In part? When? Disturbance.) Yes, under the leadership of the party and above all under Lenin's leadership, the division between us and the peasantry was bridged over by the new economic policy. This is indisputable. (Disturbance.) If any of you imagine, comrades, that in 1926 I do not grasp the meaning of the new economic policy, you are mistaken. I grasp the meaning of the new economic policy in 1926, perhaps not so well as other comrades, but still I grasp it. But you must remember that at that time, before there was any New Economic Policy, before there had been a revolution of 1917, and we were sketching the first outlines of possible developments, utilizing the experience won in previous revolutions—the great French revolution and the revolution of 1848—at that time all Marxists, not omitting Lenin (I have given quotations), were of the opinion that after the democratic revolution was completed and the land given to the peasantry, the proletariat would encounter opposition from not only the big peasants, but from a considerable section of the middle peasants, who would represent a hostile and even counter-revolutionary force.

Have there been signs among us of the truth of this prognosis? Yes, there have been signs, and fairly distinct ones. For instance, when the Machno movement in the Ukraine helped the White Guards to sweep away the Soviet power this was one proof of the correctness of Lenin's prognosis. The Antonov rising, the rising in Siberia, the rising on the Volga, the rising in Ural, the Kronstadt revolt, when the "middle peasantry" expressed their opinions to the Soviet power by means of ships' cannon—does not all this prove that Lenin's forecast was correct for a certain stage of development in the revolution? (Comrade Moyssenyenko: "And what did you propose?") Is it not perfectly clear that the passage written by me in 1922 on the division between us and the peasantry was simply a statement of these facts?

We bridged over the schism between us and the peasantry by means of the NEP. And were there differences between us during the transition to the NEP? There were no differences during the transition to the NEP. (Disturbance.) There were differences in the trade union question before the transition to the NEP, whilst the party was still seeking a means of escape from the blind alley. These differences were of serious importance. But in the question of the NEP, when Lenin

submitted the NEP standpoint to the X Party Congress, we all voted unanimously for this standpoint. And when the new trade union resolution arose as a result of the New Economic Policy—a few months after the X Party Congress—we again voted unanimously for this resolution in the CC. But during the period of transition—and the change wrought by it was no small one—the peasants declared: "We are for the Bolsheviks, but against the Communists." What does this mean? It means a peculiarly Russian form of desertion from the proletarian revolution on the part of the middle peasantry at a given stage.

I am reproached with having said that it is "hopeless to suppose that Revolutionary Russia can maintain itself in opposition to a conservative Europe." This I wrote in August, 1917, and I believe that it was perfectly right. Have we maintained ourselves against a conservative Europe? Let us consider the facts. At the moment when Germany concluded the peace treaty with the Entente, the danger was especially great. Had the German revolution not broken out at this point—that German revolution which remained incomplete, suffocated by the social democrats, yet still sufficing to overthrow the old régime and to demoralize the Hohenzollern army—had, I repeat, the German revolution, such as it was, not broken out, then we should have been overthrown. It is not by accident that the passage contains the phrase "in opposition to a conservative Europe," and not "in opposition to a capitalist Europe." Against a conservative Europe, maintaining its whole apparatus, and in particular its armies. I ask you: Could we maintain ourselves under these circumstances, or could we not? (A voice: "Are you talking to children?") That we still continue to exist is due to the fact that Europe has not remained what it was. Lenin wrote as follows on this subject:

We are living not only in one state, but in a system of states, and the continued existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist states is unthinkable as a permanency. In the end either one system or the other will win.

When did Lenin say this? On March 18, 1919, that is two years after the October Revolution. My words of 1917 signified that if our revolution did not shake Europe, did not move it, then we were lost. Is this not in substance the same? I ask all the older comrades, who thought politically before and during 1917: What was your conception of the revolution and its consequences?

When I try to recollect this, I can find no other formulation than approximately the following:

We believed: either the international revolution will hasten to our aid and then our victory is perfectly secure, or we shall perform our modest revolutionary work in the consciousness that even if we are defeated we have served the cause of revolution, and that our experience will be useful for later revolutions. It was clear to us that the victory of the proletarian revolution is impossible without the support of the international, the world revolution. Both before and after the revolution we believed: Now, or at least very soon, the revolution will break out in the other highly developed capitalist countries, or, should this not be the case, we are lost.

This was our conception of the fate of the revolution. Who said this? (Comrade Moyssenyenko: "Lenin!" A voice: "And what did he say later on?")

Lenin said this in 1921, whilst the passage quoted from me dates from 1917. I have thus a right to refer to what Lenin said in 1921. (A voice: "And what did Lenin say later on?") Later on I too said something different. (Laughter.) Both before the revolution, and after it, we believed that:

Now, or at least very soon, the revolution will break out in the other highly developed capitalist countries, or, should this not be the case, we are lost.

But in spite of this:

We exerted every effort to maintain the Soviet system at all costs, for we were aware that we were not only working for ourselves, but for the international revolution. We knew this, and we expressed this conviction both before the October Revolution and after it, and at the time when the Brest-Litovsk peace was concluded. And speaking generally, we were right.

This passage goes on to say that our path has become more intricate and winding, but that in all essentials our prognosis was correct. As I have already said, we went over to the NEP unanimously, without any differences whatever. (Comrade Moysseyenko: "To save us from utter ruin!")

True, just for that reason, to save us from utter ruin.

Comrades, I beg you to extend the time allotted for my speech. I should like to speak on the theory of socialism in one country. I ask for another half hour. (Disturbance.)

Comrades, in the question of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry...

Chairman: Please wait till we have decided. I submit three proposals: firstly, to adhere to the original time allotted to Comrade Trotsky; secondly: a prolongation of half an hour; thirdly, a prolongation of a quarter of an hour. (On a vote being taken there is a majority for the half hour prolongation.)

Relations to the Peasantry

The next passage quoted from my writings has brought me the reproach that: Whilst Lenin said: ten to twenty years of correct relations with the peasantry, and our victory is assured on an international scale; Trotskyism, on the contrary, assumes that the proletariat cannot enter into any correct relations with the peasantry until the world revolution has been accomplished. First of all I must ask the actual meaning of the passage quoted. Lenin speaks of ten to twenty years of correct relations to the peasantry. This means that Lenin did not expect socialism to be established within ten to twenty years. Why? Because under socialism we must understand a state of society in which there is neither proletariat nor peasantry, or any classes whatever. Socialism abolishes the opposition between town and country. Thus the term of twenty years is set before us, in the course of which we must pursue a political line leading to correct relations between the proletariat and the peasantry.

It has been asserted, however, that Trotskyism is of the opinion that there can be no correct relations between the proletariat and the peasantry until the world revolution has been accomplished. I am thus alleged to lay down a law according to which *incorrect* relations must be maintained with the peasantry as far as possible, until international revolution has been victorious. (Laughter.) Apparently it was not intended to express this idea here, as there is no sense in it whatever.

What was the NEP? The NEP has been a process of shunting onto a new track, precisely for the establishment of correct relations between the proletariat and the peasantry. Were there differences between us on this subject? No, there were none. What we are quarrelling about now is the taxation of the kulak, and the forms and methods to be adopted in allying the proletariat with the village poor. What is the

actual matter in hand? The best method of establishing correct relations between the peasantry and the proletariat. You have the right to disagree with individual proposals of ours, but you must recognize that the whole ideological struggle revolves around the question of what relations are correct at the present stage of development.

Were there differences between us in 1917 on the peasant question? No. The peasant decree, the "social revolutionary" peasant decree, was adopted unanimously by us as our basis. The land decree, drawn up by Lenin, was accepted by us unanimously and gave rise to no differences in our circles. Did the policy of "de-kulakization" afford any cause for differences? No, there were no differences on this. (A voice: "And Brest?") Did the struggle commenced by Lenin, for winning over the middle peasantry, give rise to differences? No, it gave rise to none. I do not assert that there were no differences whatever, but I definitely maintain that however great the differences of opinion may have been in various and even important questions, there were no differences of opinion in the matter of the main line of policy to be pursued with regard to the peasantry.

In 1919 there were rumors abroad of differences on this question. And what did Lenin write on the subject? Let us look back. I was asked at that time by the peasant Gulov: "What are the differences of opinion between you and Il'yitsch?" and I replied to this question both in the *Pravda* and in *Izvestia*. Lenin wrote as follows on the matter, both in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, in February, 1919:

The *Izvestia* of February 2, 1919, published a letter from a peasant named Gulov, who raises the question of the relations between our workers' and peasants' government and the middle peasantry, and states that there are rumors spread about to the effect that there is no harmony between Lenin and Trotsky, that there are great differences of opinion between them, and precisely in the question of the middle peasantry. Comrade Trotsky has already replied in his "Letter to the Middle Peasants," published in the *Izvestia* on February 7. Comrade Trotsky states in his letter that the rumors of differences between me and him are the most monstrous and wicked lies, spread abroad by the landowners and capitalists or their willing and unwilling accomplices. I for my part fully endorse the declaration thus made by Comrade Trotsky. There are no differences between us, and with reference to the middle peasants there are not only no differences between me and Trotsky, but no differences in the whole Communist Party, of which we are both members. Comrade Trotsky explains in his letter, clearly and in detail, why the Communist Party and the present workers' and peasants' government, elected by the Soviets and composed of members of the party, do not regard the middle peasantry as their enemies. I give my signature doubly to everything said by Comrade Trotsky.

This was before the NEP. Then came the transition to the NEP. I repeat once more that the transition to the NEP gave rise to no differences. On the NEP question I gave a report before the IV World Congress, in the course of which I polemized against Otto Bauer. Later I wrote as follows:

The NEP is regarded by the bourgeoisie and the Mensheviks as a necessary (but of course "insufficient") step toward the release of productive forces. The Menshevik theoreticians both of the Kautsky and the Otto Bauer variety, have welcomed the NEP as the dawn of capitalist restoration in Russia. They add: Either the NEP will destroy the Bolshevik dictatorship (favorable result) or the Bolshevik dictatorship will destroy the NEP (regrettable result.)

The whole of my report at the IV Party Congress went to prove that the NEP will not destroy the Bolshevik dictatorship, but that the Bolshevik dictatorship, under the conditions given by the NEP, will secure the supremacy of the socialist elements of economics over the capitalist.

Lenin on Socialism in One Country

Another passage from my works has been brought up against me—and here I come to the question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country—which reads as follows:

The contradictions in the position of the workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelming agrarian population can only be solved on an international scale and in the arena of the proletarian world revolution.

This was said in 1922. The accusing resolution makes the following statement:

The conference places on record that such views as these on the part of Comrade Trotsky and his followers, in the fundamental question of the character and prospects of our revolution, have nothing in common with the views of our party, with Leninism."

If it had been stated that a shade of difference existed—I do not find this even today—or that these views have not yet been precisely formulated (and I do not see the precise formulation). But it is stated quite flatly: these views "have nothing in common with the views of the party, with Leninism."

Here I must quote a few lines closely related to Leninism:

The complete victory of the socialist revolution in one country is unthinkable, and demands the active co-operation of at least some advanced countries, among which we cannot count Russia.

It was not I who said this, but one greater than I. Lenin said this November 8, 1918. Not before the October Revolution, but on November 8, 1918, one year after we had seized power. If he had said nothing else but this, we could easily infer what we liked from it by tearing one sentence or the other out of its context. (A voice: "He was speaking of the final victory!") No, pardon me, he said: "demands the active co-operation." Here it is impossible to sidetrack from the main question to the question of "intervention," for it is plainly stated that the victory of socialism demands—not merely protection against intervention—but the co-operation of "at least some advanced countries, among which we cannot count Russia." (Voices: "And what follows from that?") This is not the only passage in which we see that not merely an intervention is meant. And thus the conclusion to be drawn is the fact that the standpoint which I have defended, to the effect that the internal contradictions arising out of the backwardness of our country must be solved by international revolution, is not my exclusive property, but that Lenin defended these same views, only incomparably more definitely and categorically.

We are told that this applied to the epoch in which the law of the unequal development of the capitalist countries is supposed to have been still unknown, that is, the epoch before imperialism. I cannot go thoroughly into this. But I must unfortunately place on record that Comrade Stalin commits a great theoretical and historical error here. The law of the unequal development of capitalism is older than imperialism. Capitalism is developing very unequally today in the various countries. But in the nineteenth century this inequality was greater than in the twentieth. At that time England was lord of the world, while Japan on the other hand was a feudal state closely confined within its own limits. At the time when serfdom was abolished among us, Japan began to adapt itself to capitalist civilization. China was, however, still wrapped in the deepest slumber. And so forth. At this time the inequality of capitalist development was greater than now. Those inequalities were as well known to Marx and Engels as they

are to us. Imperialism has developed a more "leveling tendency than has pre-imperialist capitalism, for the reason that financial capital is the most elastic form of capital. It is, however, indisputable that today, too, there are great inequalities in development. But if it is maintained that in the nineteenth century, before imperialism, capitalism developed less unequally, and the theory of the possibility of socialism in one country was therefore wrong at that time, whilst today, now that imperialism has increased the heterogeneity of development, the theory of socialism in one country has become correct, then this assertion contradicts all historical experience, and completely reverses fact. No, this will not do; other and more serious arguments must be sought:

Comrade Stalin has written:

Those who deny the possibility of the establishment of socialism in one country must deny at the same time the justifiability of the October Revolution. (Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, p. 215.)

But in 1918 we heard from Lenin that the establishment of socialism requires the direct co-operation of some advanced countries, "among which we cannot count Russia." Yet Lenin did not deny the justifiability of the October Revolution. And he wrote as follows regarding this in 1918:

I know that there are some ingenious people (this was written against the adherents of Kautsky and Suchanov), who think themselves very clever, and even call themselves socialists; these maintain that we should not have seized power until revolution had broken out in all countries. They are not aware that in speaking thus they are deviating from revolution and going over to the bourgeoisie. To wait until the working masses accomplish the international revolution is to wait till we are stiff and rigid, to wait till we are frozen to death. This is nonsense...

I am sorry, but it goes on as follows:

This is nonsense. The difficulty of revolution is known to all of us. For the final victory can only be on an international scale, and can only be brought about by the joint exertions of the workers of all countries. (Lenin, Vol. 15, page 287, written on May 14, 1918.)

Despite this, Lenin did not deny the "justifiability" of the October Revolution.

And further. In 1921—not in 1914, but in 1921—Lenin wrote:

In the advanced capitalist countries there is a class of agricultural laborers, created by decades of wage work. It is only in countries where this class is sufficiently developed that the transition from capitalism to socialism is possible.

Here it is not a question of intervention but of the level of economic development and of the development of the class relations of the country.

In many of our works, and in all of our utterances in the press, we have emphasized that this is not the case in Russia, that in Russia the industrial workers are in the minority, and that the overwhelming majority are small farmers. Social revolution in such a country as this can only be finally successful under two conditions: firstly, the condition that it is supported at the right time by the social revolution in one or several more advanced countries...

The other condition is the understanding between the proletariat and the majority of the peasant population...

We know that only an understanding with the peasantry can save the socialist revolution in Russia, so long as social revolution has not broken out in other countries. This must be stated openly at all meetings, and in the whole press. (Lenin, speech at the Xth Party Congress of the RCP, 1921.)

Lenin did not state that the understanding with the peasantry sufficed, enabling us to build up socialism independent of the fate of the international proletariat. No, this understanding is only one of the conditions. The other condition

is the support to be given the revolution by other countries. He combines these two conditions with each other, emphasizing their special necessity for us as we live in a backward country.

And finally, it is brought up against me that I have stated that "a real advance of socialist economy in Russia is only possible after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe." It is probable, comrades, that we have become inaccurate in the use of various terms. What do we understand under "socialist economy" in the strict sense of the term? We have great successes to record, and are naturally proud of these. I have endeavored to describe them in my booklet, *Toward Socialism or Capitalism*, for the benefit of extent of these successes. Comrade Rykov's theses state that we are approaching the pre-war level. But this is not quite accurate. Is our population the same as before the war? No, it is larger. And the average consumption of industrial goods per head is considerably less than in 1913. The people's Supreme Economic Council calculates that in this respect we shall not regain the pre-war level until 1930. And then, what was the level of 1913? It was the level of misery, of backwardness, of barbarism. If we speak of socialist economy, and of a real advance in socialist economy, we mean: no antagonism between town and country, general content, prosperity, culture. This is what we understand under the real advance of socialist economy. And we are still far indeed from this goal. We have destitute children, we have unemployed, from the villages there come three million superfluous workers every year, half a million of whom seek work in the cities, where the industries cannot absorb more than 1,100,000 yearly. We have a right to be proud of what we have achieved, but we must not distort the historical perspective. What we have accomplished is not yet a real advance of socialist economy, but only the first serious steps on that long bridge leading from capitalism to socialism. Is this the same thing? By no means. The passage quoted against me stated the truth.

In 1922 Lenin wrote:

But we have not yet even completed the foundation of our socialist economy, and the hostile forces of expiring capitalism may even yet deprive us of it again. This must be clearly recognized and openly admitted, for there is nothing so dangerous as *illusions* and dizziness, especially at great heights. And there is nothing "frightful," nothing which can give the slightest cause for despair, in the recognition of this bitter truth, for we have always proclaimed and repeated that elementary truth of Marxism, that *the joint efforts of the workers of some advanced countries are necessary for the victory of socialism.*" (Lenin, *Complete Works*, Russian edition, Vol. XX/2, page 487.)

The question here is therefore not of intervention, but of the joint efforts of several advanced countries for the establishment of socialism. Or was this written by Lenin before the epoch of imperialism, before the law of unequal development was known? No, he wrote this in 1922.

There is, however, another passage, in the article on coöperatives, one single passage, which is set up against everything else that Lenin wrote, or rather the attempt is made so to oppose it. (A voice: "Accidentally!") Not by any means accidentally. I am in full agreement with the sentence. It must be understood properly. The passage is as follows:

As a matter of fact, all the great means of production are in the possession of the state, the state power is in the hands of the proletariat; the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of poor and poorest peasantry, the security of the leadership of this proletariat over the peasantry, etc.; is then this not everything which we require to enable us to build up out of the coöperatives, of the coöperatives alone, which we treated at one time in a step-motherly manner, as petty tradesman affairs

and which we are now justified to a certain extent in so treating under the NEP—to build up out of the coöperatives alone the complete socialist state of society? This is not yet the establishment of the socialist state of society, but it is everything which is necessary and sufficient for this realization."

(A voice: "You read much too quickly." Laughter.) Then you must give me a few minutes more, comrades. (Laughter. A voice: "Right!") Right? I am agreed. (A voice: "That is just what we want.")

What is the question here? What elements are here enumerated? In the first place, the possession of the means of production; in the second, the power of the proletariat; thirdly, the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry; fourthly, the proletarian leadership of the peasantry, and fifthly, the coöperatives. I ask you: does any one of you believe that socialism can be established in one single isolated country? Could perchance the proletariat in Bulgaria alone, if it had the peasantry behind it, seize power, build up the coöperatives and establish socialism? No, that would be impossible. Consequently further elements are required in addition to the above: the geographical situation, natural wealth, techniques culture. Lenin enumerates here the conditions of the state power, property relations and the organizational forms of the coöperatives. Nothing more. And he says that we, in order to establish socialism, need not proletarianize the peasantry, nor need we any fresh revolutions, but that we are able, with power in our hands, in alliance with the peasantry, and with the aid of the coöperatives, to carry our task to completion through the agency of these state and social forms and methods.

But, comrades, we know another definition which Lenin gave of socialism. According to this definition, socialism is equal to soviet power plus electrification. Is electrification cancelled in the passage just quoted? No, it is not cancelled. Everything which Lenin otherwise said about the establishment of socialism—and I have adduced clear formulations above—is *supplemented* by this quotation, but *not cancelled*. For electrification is not something to be carried out in a vacuum, but under certain conditions, under the conditions imposed by the world market and the world economy, which are very tangible facts. The world economy is not mere theoretical generalization, but a definite and powerful reality, whose laws encompass us; a fact of which every year of our development convinces us.

The New Theory

Before dealing with this in detail, I should like to remind you of the following: Some of our comrades, before they created an entirely new theory, and in my opinion an entirely wrong one, based on a one-sided interpretation of Lenin's article on the coöperatives, held quite a different standpoint. In 1924 Comrade Stalin did not say the same as he does today. This was pointed out at the XIV Party Congress, but the passage quoted did not disappear on that account, but remains fully maintained even in 1926.

Let us read:

Is it possible to attain the final victory of socialism in one single country without the joint efforts of the proletariats of several advanced countries? No, it is impossible. The exertions of a single country suffice to overthrow the bourgeoisie—this is shown by the history of our revolution. But for the final victory of socialism, *for the organization of socialist production, the efforts of one single country, especially of such an agrarian country as Russia, are not sufficient—for this the efforts of the proletariats of several advanced countries are necessary.* (*The Principles of Leninism*, April, 1924.)

This was written by Stalin in 1924, but the resolution quotes me only up to 1922. (Laughter.) Yes, this is what was said in 1924: For the organization of socialist economy—not for protection against intervention, not as guarantee against the restoration of the capitalist order, no, no, but for “the organization of socialist production,” the efforts of one single country, especially such an agrarian country as Russia, do not suffice. Comrade Stalin has given up this standpoint. He has of course a right to do so.

In his book, *Problems of Leninism*, he says:

What are the defects of this formulation? They consist of the fact that it throws two different questions together: the question of the possibility of the establishment of socialism in one country, by its own unaided efforts—to which an affirmative reply must be given; and the question of whether a country in which the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established can be considered as completely secure against intervention, and consequently as completely secure against the restoration of the capitalist order, unless a victorious revolution has taken place in a number of other countries—to which a negative reply must be given. (Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, page 44, 1926.)

But if you will allow me to say so, we do not find these two questions confused with one another in the first passage quoted, dating from 1924. Here it is not a question of intervention, but solely of the impossibility of the complete organization of a completely socialized production by the unaided efforts of such a peasant country as Russia.

And truly, comrades, can the whole question be reduced to one of intervention? Can we simply imagine that we are establishing socialism here in this house, while the enemies outside in the street are throwing stones through the window panes? The matter is not so simple. Intervention is war, and war is a continuation of politics, but with other weapons. But politics are applied economics. Hence the whole question is one of the economic relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist countries. These relations are not exhausted in that one form known as intervention. They possess a much more continuous and profound character. Comrade Bucharin has stated in so many words that the sole danger of intervention consists of the fact that in the event that no intervention comes:

... we can work toward socialism even on this wretched technical basis (we can work toward it, that is true.—L. T.), that this growth of socialism will be much slower, that we shall move forward at a snail's pace; but all the same we shall work toward socialism, and we shall realize it. (At the XIV Party Congress.)

That we are working toward socialism is true. That we shall realize it hand in hand with the world proletariat is incontestable. (Laughter.) In my opinion it is out of place at a communist conference to laugh when the realization of socialism hand in hand with the international proletariat is spoken of. (Laughter. Voices: “No demagoguery!” “You cannot catch us with that!”) But I tell you that we shall never realize socialism at a *snail's pace*, for the world's markets keep too sharp a control over us. (A voice: “You are quite alarmed!”) How does Comrade Bucharin imagine this realization? In his last article in *The Bolshevik*, which I must say is the most scholastic work which has ever issued from Bucharin's pen (laughter), he says:

The question is whether we can work toward socialism, and establish it, if we abstract this from the international questions.

Just listen to this: “If we can work toward socialism, and establish it, if we abstract this question from the international questions.” If we accomplish this “abstraction,” then of

course the rest is easy. But we *cannot*. That is the whole point. (Laughter.)

It is possible to walk naked in the streets of Moscow in January, if we can abstract ourselves from the weather and the police. (Laughter.) But I am afraid that this abstraction would fail, both with respect to weather and to police, were we to make the attempt. (Laughter.)

[Concluded in the Next Issue]

LEON TROTSKY.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Behind Russia's War Front

RUSSIA'S ECONOMIC FRONT FOR WAR AND PEACE, “An Appraisal of the Three Five-Year Plans,” by A. Yugow. Harper & Bros., New York.

Yugow's book has been more or less lost amid the voluminous writings about Russia, although the author indicates by the title that he is trying to write a book for the war, for the “American war front.” He examines the economic forces of Russia from the point of view of the possibility of this ally of the United States “holding out” and their usefulness for the crushing of Hitler Germany.

A. Yugow was a member of the Russian Social Democratic Party. He now belongs to the Dan group which shortly before the war split in Paris from the Abramowitz group. The cause of the split was what attitude to take toward Stalinism and Russia. Already at that time the Dan group took a “pro-Soviet,” People's Front position. This development is in itself very interesting. Dan and his friends belong today to the numerous Social Democratic splinter groups which have reconciled themselves with Stalinism and which also have, so to speak, forgiven his revolutionary past since the Russian Army fights on the right side, namely, on the side of the United Nations. And for this, Dan and his friends return to their original position of departure, i.e., to their pro-Allied position during the First World War. In New York the Dan group is closely associated to the Austrian Social Democrats, who have surrendered to the same pro-Ally, People's Front position. In their monthly magazine, *Labor Information*, they advocate an open pro-Stalinist war policy, in which all the crimes of the Stalin régime are forgiven since they were necessary for the building of a powerful Red Army to resist Hitler Germany. This brand of socialists have similar co-thinking groups in England. They are, without any doubt, an important political tendency in the British labor movement which, under the present political circumstances, has great chances for a temporary political upsurge. Therefore, these neo-Stalinists must be watched and fought.

Yugow is one of their typical representatives. He held a bureaucratic position in the Moscow Food Trust from about 1918-19 up to 1924. Although a member of the Russian Social Democratic Party he was able to hold this job until 1924 and then leave peacefully for Berlin which at that time was the headquarters of the Mensheviks, who worked closely together with the Executive Committee of the SPD. There he worked as an economist until 1927. By using official Soviet government statistics he was able to organize his own small bureau of economic statistics. In 1933 Yugow and his bureau moved to Paris and, so the neo-Stalinists tell, his statistical expositions were so excellent that even the Soviet Government bought his

goods regularly! (Thus the Soviet Government bought back its own statistics, contributing in part to the continued existence of the bureau of the economist, Yugow!)

This book is based upon a diligent compilation and exploitation of all these official statistics. Yugow utilizes no critical material whatsoever. He does not give a concrete picture of the development of Soviet economy. He fails, for instance, to make use of Russian newspaper reports, critical party congress speeches, etc. This uncritical, unanalytical collection of facts often makes the diligent compilation worthless. In spite of this insufficient method, something appears which could be used as material in a critical analysis of Russian industry and its development.

Yugow examines the industrialization of the years 1929-41, the reconstruction of agriculture, foreign trade, finance and the geographic distribution of industry, the problem of the standard of living and of working conditions in the Soviet Union. On the whole, this presentation amounts to idealization of the results of the Stalin five-year plan in the field of Russia's industrialization. In so far as there are remarks of a critical nature in Yugow's book they are timid justifications of his former Social-Democratic position. He cannot conceal the fact that the cost of production in Russia is 30 to 50 per cent higher than in the European countries, that prices of goods are 100 to 200 per cent higher than in all capitalist countries. He cannot altogether gloss over the cruel process of Stalin's industrial construction, but as soon as he is faced with a deeper theoretical question he carefully evades it. His remarks about the problem of whether industrialization everywhere must be paid for so dearly as it was in the case of Russia are characteristic.

But perhaps the privations which the Russian people are now bearing are the inevitable result of any industrialization. It may be the incapable price of the rise from the level of a backward economy to that of an advanced industrial country; perhaps the nation had to be "starved into industrialization." We do not admit the correctness of this thesis. It is a historical fact that a considerable number of capitalistic countries paid for the period of original capital accumulation by the impoverishment of their masses. But it is not permissible to draw an analogy between Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century and England of the early eighteenth. Russia has long outlived its period of original accumulation of capital, when the first factories and mills were built by the slave and semi-slave labor of former peasants in the latter half of the nineteenth century. (Page 4)

Here Yugow states that what must not be, cannot be and simply disregards the problem of the original accumulation that arose during the five-year plan. Anton Ciliga in his book, *Land of the Great Lie*, has given a very well written description of working conditions during the construction of the White Sea Canal, Dneipostroy and other great undertakings, in which he draws a comparison between the working conditions of this period and the forced proletarianization of the *Felahn* in Egypt, as described by Rosa Luxemburg in *Accumulation of Capital*. A whole series of reports of the period of industrialization gives the same picture; for example, the construction of Magnitogorsk for which the Kirgis were brought from the steppes. These Kirgis, a people of hunters and shepherds, were crowded into mass quarters and were forced to live and work under the most primitive conditions. An analytical examination of Russia's industrialization should give its most attentive consideration to a thorough investigation of the theoretical as well as practical side of the process. The question should be raised whether a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat would not find more fertile and democratic methods to draw backward people into industry.

The same light-minded method is applied when investigating the living and working conditions of the Soviet Union. Of course, Yugow cannot be silent about the sharp differences in wages, the relatively low purchasing power and the indirect, anti-social taxes. Nor can he help mentioning the measures of compulsion applied to the working class in industry, the reactionary rôle of the trade unions and its fusion with the state bureaucracy. Nevertheless, here too, he tries to paint the picture as favorably as possible. Naturally, no serious attempt is made to define the position of the working class in its relation to the bureaucracy.

The development of the Kolkhoz and the Sovkhoz is described in the same manner. Yugow estimates that 35 to 40 per cent of the Kolkhoz's income goes to the government. He reports on the forced collectivization of the Kolkhoz, the lack of self-administration, and the Stakhanovism (i.e., piecework) present even in agricultural work. He has to admit that the standard of living of the average peasant is still very low, in spite of the cultural and technical improvements in the village. He speaks of a certain class differentiation in the Kolkhoz, but again without any critical attitude toward the system of the ruling bureaucracy which exploits them mercilessly.

At the same time a new process is taking place a new social stratification among the peasants. Thousands are more or less prosperous while millions are struggling for a mere existence.

The comparatively strongest criticism is applied to the problem of foreign trade. Although he says (in just a single paragraph) that it is bad for Russia to exclude herself from the rest of the world and that this has done harm to her economy, he asserts in the same sentence that in view of the present war it might have been a great blessing that Russia developed in such an autarchic manner. However, since Yugow has set himself the task of finding a middle road between American democracy and Stalinist Russia, he immediately expresses his belief of a breakdown of the monopoly of foreign trade which would make it possible for American finance capitalism to export goods to Russia, to peacefully conquer the Russian market and to make it part of capitalist world economy. Yugow's goal for Russian economy is to see her with a stable currency and engaged in export trade.

If the war between Germany and Russia ends in the defeat of Hitler it would seem that the existing system of foreign trade monopoly will be bound to undergo considerable change.

In the last chapter entitled "The Test of War," Yugow summarizes his viewpoints: The Russian soldier is fighting so boldly because the Stalinist economy has proven to be progressive and realistic. The Russian soldier knows why he is dying, suffering, sacrificing himself, and that explains the success of the Soviet armies. After the war it will be easy to adopt the necessary democratic reforms peacefully, in spite of the bureaucratic leadership. The Russian planned economy will be peacefully replaced by a "democratic" economy.

Yes, patriotism is a powerful emotion, capable of moving people to great heroism. But not patriotism of the "geographic," every-day variety. That kind of "love of fatherland" was not able to hold at the front the scattering Russian army in 1917; it was not able to inspire the French army to prolonged, stubborn resistance in 1940. In order to fire millions of people with a great passion for a battle to the death, to inspire them to great deeds, that patriotism itself must be imbued with great social passions and high aims for which millions are willing to fight and die.

When the "will to die" is proof of a social régime's firmness, then Hitler and his armies have succeeded best in main-

taining such a theory. In the fourth year of the war, millions of his people have died "the patriotic death of a martyr," and when the defenders of Sevastopol conduct themselves like heroes, those who are attacking behave likewise. The problem of the present imperialist war can neither be posed nor solved in this manner and the whole shallowness of "neo-Stalinism" immediately reveals itself, if one seriously considers the question. When warlike virtues are taken as criteria for the social or reactionary character of a warring country we are dealing with false and reactionary concepts. The reason why the Stalinist régime has comparatively succeeded in meeting the aggressor's attack until now is an entirely different question which cannot be answered by a "neo-Stalinist."

MARY CASTING.

Truth a la Webbs

THE TRUTH ABOUT SOVIET RUSSIA, by Beatrice and Sidney Webb, with an Essay on the Webbs by Bernard Shaw. Longmans, Green & Co., N. Y.; 128 pp., \$1.50.

This book is a great time-saver—you do not have to read it. That is to say, you do not have to read it unless you are interested in the pathology of a Fabian mind turned Stalinist at the age of eighty.

The purpose of the book, in brief, is to prove that Russia under Stalin is not only a democracy, but the greatest and finest of all political democracies—better than the United States, England and Switzerland combined. If here and there Beatrice Webb, who contributes the largest section of the book in a chapter called "The New Civilization," finds something that smacks of the undemocratic to the "Western mind," she can prove, by offering you her word for it, that actually this very something is the essence of democracy, given an ignorant and backward country. Ignorance is a vital proof in her analysis. It would appear that where ignorance prevails (this is her version of Duranty's "Russian soul"), totalitarianism is the finest flower of democracy. As to figures and documentation, there are none in the book. Significantly, with all her reference to Russian ignorance, there is nowhere comment on the decrees excluding the greatest part of the Russian people from higher education.

The stupidities one can read in tripe like this! Where all objective observers find the standard of living of the Russian masses going down, the Right Honorable the Lady Passfield (that's Beatrice) finds the Soviet Government "enormously increasing the health, wealth and culture of the inhabitants." Facts, please! Oh no, it's all there in the 1936 Constitution. The Webbs read this 1936 Constitution thoroughly (the Anna Louis Strong translation is available in this book), and reading it were so overwhelmed by its differences from the Bolshevik constitutions of an earlier day that they fell right smack in love with it.

If you care to take their word for it (and if you are above the age of eight, we see no reason for doing so), the Russian masses are growing fat according to the principle of "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work"; the trade unions are flourishing institutions (in an ignorant, backward country they can't strike, you know); Stalin doesn't take a step unless he gets the approval of the elected representatives of the people; and every little thing the government proposes is discussed freely and without hindrance by the very lowest of peasants.

And the treason trials? Poof! The great material benefits of Russian life under Stalin have "discredited the Trotsky

movement, which I think was finally liquidated by the murder of Trotsky in Mexico by one of his own followers." (!) And besides, anybody can see that all the "fifth columnists" were exterminated. And the idolization of Stalin? Well, you see, when Lenin died it was agreed that no one could fill his place. (How true!) So, you see, the leaders of the Party got together and "there ensued a tacit understanding that Stalin should be 'boosted' as the supreme leader of the proletariat" because the ignorant masses needed someone to idolize. Of course, this "idolization" has largely ceased to exist (yes, yes) and everybody is agreed that this "infantile disease" will die out. As proof: Stalin recently stepped down to the "prosaic position of Prime Minister." Moreover, he has never "claimed to be more than the duly appointed official of the Communist Party and the democratically elected member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR." Isn't that sweet and simple! Too bad the Right Honorable the Lady Beatrice didn't trouble to tell us what had happened to all the party leaders who were around when Stalin was "tacitly" elevated to Lenin's place.

This goes on and on, and it's all based on "The Constitution of 1936 [which is] based on the Rights and Obligations of Man." No less! And what can a person do in answer except try his best not to get too sick.

In a particularly octogenarian introduction, Bernard Shaw describes how the Webbs "waited until the wreckage and ruin of change was ended, its mistakes remedied and the Communist State fairly launched." Then they went and investigated. Precisely. They waited until the "wreckage and ruin" of Bolshevik rule under Lenin and Trotsky, who were wrecking and ruining an old order and building a new one, had been supplanted by Stalin. The revolution under Lenin and Trotsky was a most unrespectable thing: they supplanted the morality and mechanics of an exploitative society with the morality and mechanics of a socialist society; they vigorously sought to extend the revolution. The Webbs had no use for them. But the Webbs found Paradise-on-Earth in the destruction of the revolution by Stalin!

Shaw explains how under the Webbs British socialism became respectable. And it is to make the bourgeois world see Stalinist Russia as a respectable institution, something they could never have attempted with the Russia of Lenin and Trotsky, that the Webbs first wrote their long, two-volume excursion into fantasy and plain chicanery, and now this condensation. "No Russian," says Shaw, "could have done this all-important job for us." No doubt! No doubt!

E. GARRETT.

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